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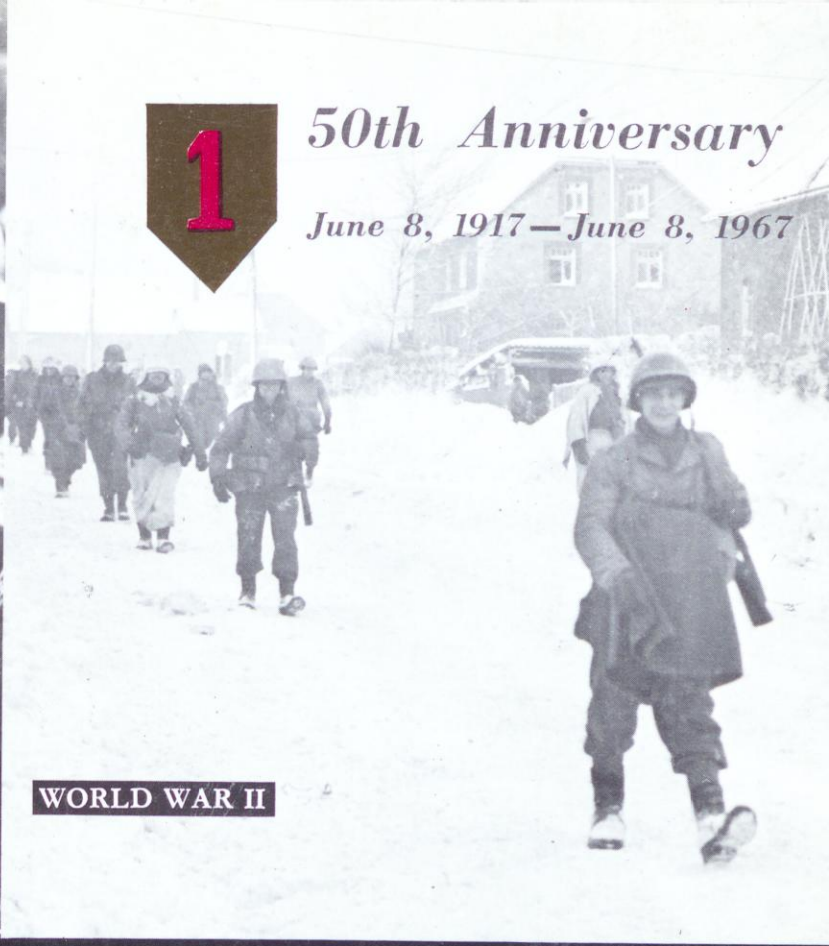
50th Anniversary

June 8, 1917—June 8, 1967



DANGER forward

The Magazine Of The Big Red One, Vietnam

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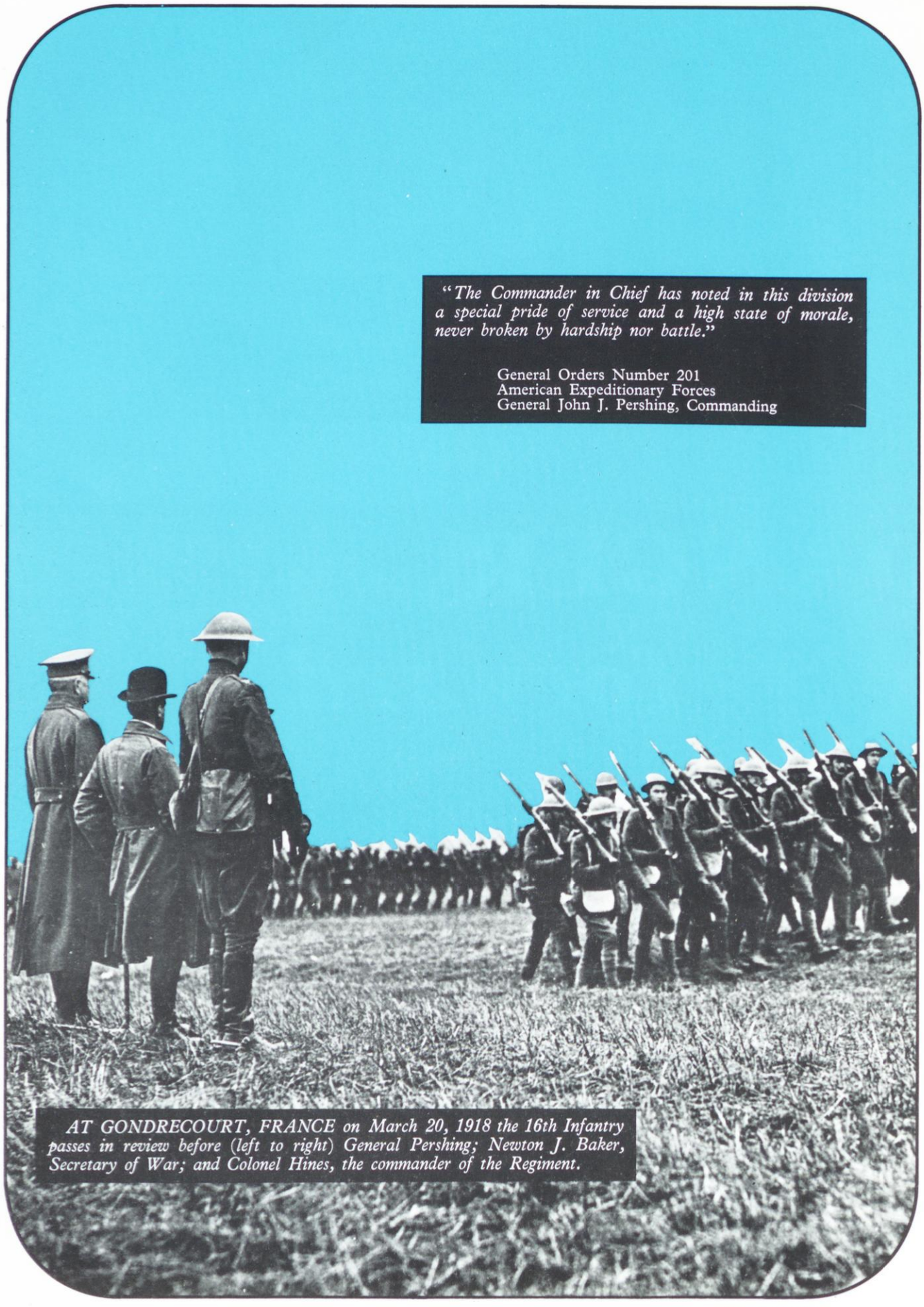
"The Commander in Chief has noted in this division a special pride of service and a high state of morale, never broken by hardship nor battle."

General Orders Number 201
American Expeditionary Forces
General John J. Pershing, Commanding



AT GONDRECOURT, FRANCE on March 20, 1918 the 16th Infantry passes in review before (left to right) General Pershing; Newton J. Baker, Secretary of War; and Colonel Hines, the commander of the Regiment.

National Archives

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Volume One, Number Two — June 1967

DANGER forward

The Magazine Of The Big Red One, Vietnam

First Infantry Division
APO San Francisco 96345

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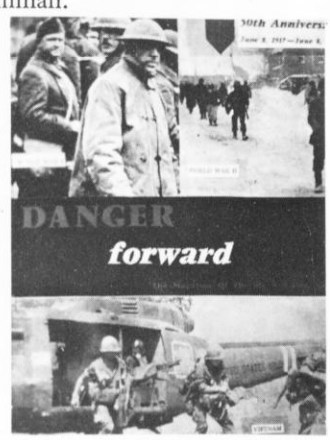
The cover:
First Division troops after arriving in France (World War I), advancing through Belgium (World War II) and conducting an assault on a landing zone in War Zone C (Vietnam). Vietnam photo by SP4 Don Tallman.



June, 8, 1967 is the 50th anniversary of the organization of the First Infantry Division. To we who wear the BIG RED ONE on our uniforms today, the history of the Division and its record of achievement in past wars are sources of pride, esprit and courage to carry on the fight in Vietnam in the finest tradition of those who wore the patch in combat previously.

This anniversary issue of "DANGER FORWARD"—a title that became part of First Division vocabulary in 1944 when the Normandy CP was so labelled—explores the facts behind the BIG RED ONE legend. Here is the story of the men who formed America's first division, fought with it in Europe, then in North Africa and Europe again and do battle with it now in Southeast Asia. It is the story of the brave and the not so brave; the story of men confronted by war who fought together to defend themselves, their loved ones and their country. The story is told again so that the men, their deeds and their sacrifices may never be forgotten.

1LT David L. Raney, Editor

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DANGER FORWARD, an authorized publication of the US Army, provides timely, authoritative information of professional interest on combat operations, revolutionary development programs and combat support procedures of the First Infantry Division, Vietnam. It serves as a means of expression for views of the Commanding General and achieves command information objectives of the Department of the Army and the First Infantry Division. Material of interest to Division members and the Army in general is invited and should be mailed to: Editor, DANGER FORWARD, Information Office, First Infantry Division, APO 96345. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Department of the Army. Narratives, photos and statistics are approved by MACV Office of Information. The magazine is printed at Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd., Tokyo. The title, DANGER FORWARD, is copyrighted by the Society of the First Division.

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Called To Lead

The US Army's new First Division would spearhead the American fighting effort which led to victory for the Allies in World War I.

ON MAY 7, 1917, A MONTH and a day after Congress, at the request of President Woodrow Wilson, had declared war on Germany, Major General John J. Pershing, then commanding the Army's Southern Department headquartered at San Antonio, Texas, was summoned to Washington. General Pershing had returned to the US in February after earning fame for leading a punitive expeditionary force which had tracked down the Mexican bandit, Pancho Villa.

At 8: 30 a.m., May 10, General Pershing arrived in the Nation's capital. Two hours later, he was named Commanding General of US forces to be sent to France. Meeting with the Army Chief of Staff, the commander was asked to pick units for an initial division. General Pershing chose the crack 16th, 18th, 26th, and 28th Infantry Regiments. So begins the story of the First Infantry Division.

On May 28, General Pershing and his staff set sail for Europe. The new Division was not far behind. On June 8, the outfit was officially named the First Expeditionary Division. Its commander was

ANSWERING THE CALL TO ARMS, thousands of young Americans "joined up" after war was declared in April, 1917. Five months later, men of the new First Division were in France (right) *digging trenches for protection against air raids.*

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THROUGH THE VALLEY FORGE WINTER of 1917–1918, the First Division prepared for combat. Men of the 16th Infantry gather fire wood near a mess kitchen.

National Archives

Major General William L. Sibert. From 1907 to 1914, General Sibert had been engineer in charge of constructing the eastern half of the Panama Canal. He had been promoted by Congress from Lieutenant Colonel to Brigadier General in 1915.

The new commander organized the Division into the 1st and 2d Infantry Brigades, a 1st Field Artillery Brigade, Divisional Troops and Trains. The lineage of many of these units paralled the growth of America. D Battery, 5th Field Artillery Regiment was nicknamed "Captain John McClelland's Company," having been formed in 1861 and served in all major Civil War battles and in the Spanish-American War and Phillipine Insurrection. The Infantry had served alongside the 16th in all three campaigns and had been present for the fall of Manila. The 26th and 28th Infantry Regiments dated from February, 1901, and also served in the Phillipine Insurrection. The 1st Engineers, part of the Division Trains, had served in the major portion of the Civil War and the Spanish-American War.

The new division was sprinkled with veteran West Point officers and seasoned noncommissioned personnel, but consisted mainly of volunteers who had rushed to join up after war was declared. It numbered 14,000. By the end of the war, it was to double in size.

Thanks to the new concept by which destroyers escorted merchant vessels on Atlantic voyages, not one German U-boat attempted to attack the 12 ships taking the first American combat troops to war. On June 28, 1917, the men stepped ashore at Saint-Nazaire, France. French officials immediately demanded that the "Yanks" show themselves and their flag to bolster the sagging spirits of a France tired of savage war. On July 4, the 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, chosen because it had the best march step, paraded through the streets of Paris. Along the five-mile route to the tomb of Lafayette, French citizens shouted, "Vive les Teddies!" Women rushed to the marchers. Garlands of flowers were hung on each man's campaign hat and cologne sprinkled on his uniform. At the tomb, one of General Pershing's staff uttered the famous words, "Lafayette, we are here!"

Sixty-five miles northeast of Paris was the Western Front. At the time the marching men of the 16th Infantry were leaving for the area where they would begin training, German trench fortifications stretched from near Ostend on the Belgium coast, through France to the Swiss-German border. The French Army was just beginning to recover from a near mutiny over inept commanding. The British, who had suffered appaling losses of precious cargo from German U-boat raids, launched an offensive at the end of July near the province of Flanders. Opposite them, the German Fourth Army manned six successive lines of trenches and concrete protected machine gun nests. In one day the British lost 31,850 men killed. The fighting continued without change in position until ice sealed the area four months later. Against this backdrop of mounting losses, the Allies looked to the Americans for help.

On July 6, General Sibert received orders officially designating his unit as the First Division. His men settled down for training in the Toul-Dijon-Troyes region. Some moved in with local families; others cleared quarters in barns. Water had to be chlorinated. Rations came irregularly. Mail delivery rarely occurred more than once a month. Training was conducted at this time

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by the French 47th Chasseur Alpine Division. Selected infantrymen attended gas, bayonet, and demolitions schools. Companies worked all day in dummy trenches. They learned what a Mills bomb (British grenade) was; how to fire a Stokes mortar, but had very little time for rifle practice.

In October, one battalion from each regiment was sent into the lines to spend ten days with French regulars. Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall later described the area chosen for the initial test of American skill as, "the Toul sector, about fifteen miles northeast of that city in the rolling hills of Lorraine. It had been quiet on the front for three years, and both sides appeared content to let it remain that way."

On the morning of October 23, C Battery, 6th Field Artillery commander Captain Idus McLendon saw that his men were in position. He yelled, "Fire!" Sergeant Alex Arch pulled the lanyard which sent a 75mm howitzer round screaming toward German lines. The First Division had fired the first American shot of the war.

Ten days later, the 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, the unit which had paraded through Paris, suffered the first American casualties. The Germans had watched the Americans move into position. They intended to inflict a humilating defeat on the cocky new arrivals. Near midnight, November 21, under a barrage of artillery fire, storm troops stole into the trenches occupied by the 16th. Eleven Division soldiers were captured and three killed: Corporal James B. Gresham of Evansville, Ind; Private Thomas F. Enright of Pittsburg, and Private Merle D. Hay from Glidden, Iowa. When the news reached the US, the three dead members of the Division became the war's first American heroes.

Near the end of the month, General Sibert returned to Washington to become Chief of Gas Warfare. His successor as Division Commander was Major General Robert E. Bullard, a former classmate of General Pershing's at West Point. He was considered by one historian as a "nonpareil among fighting men and ... one of the hearty types who have a natural way with enlisted men."

No matter how hearty he may have been, even General Bullard had sensed the frightening aspect of the war in which his men were now involved. He described the trench raid as "a short, terrible, crashing fight, filled with danger and death. It is preceded and followed by a tornado of artillery fire that drives men into the earth as the only safety, from which they may not emerge at all—or emerge to death or capture. Its shattering, merciless action makes it terrible to both raiders and raided." The new commander set about training the Division in a free-wheeling, attacking style as opposed to the French defensive methods of trench fighting. Through the rest of the "Valley Forge Winter" of 1917 and into the first part of 1918, the Division remained in training.

By April, 1918, the Germans had fought within 40 miles of Paris in their last bid for victory. At the end of the month, Division forces were moved into the Picardy Sector to bolster the exhausted French First Army. To the Division's front lay the small village of Cantigny, situated on rising ground in countryside dotted with forests hiding German artillery. It was a perfect German observation post.

AFTER 20 DAYS OF TOUGH TRAINING, men of the 16th Infantry take a break. On the day this photo was taken, the First Division was ordered to launch the first American attack of the war, against Cantigny, a heavily fortified German observation post.

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VICTIMS OF A GAS ATTACK three days before, members of the 18th Infantry arrive at Field Hospital No. 3 near Froissy, France on May 6, 1918.

THE LONDON EVENING NEWS

BRAVO, YOUNG AMERICANS

On May 3, the 18th Infantry was hit by high explosive and toxic shells. After the bombardment, long lines of men, their hands on each other's shoulders as the blind led the blind, were evacuated. Two hundred members of the First died and 600 were wounded or gassed. Division artillery replied by sending out 10,000 shells every 24 hours for a week. The Division's dander was up. Under the teaching of the French, patrols and raids were made to toughen the Americans. The French were impressed by the way the men of the First took their losses and developed their fighting skills. On May 15, the French commander ordered General Bullard to take Cantigny.

The 28th Regiment, later to be known as the "Black Lions of Cantigny," was chosen to lead the assault. Their commander was Colonel Hanson E. Ely, all six feet two and 220 pounds of him. Historian Laurence Stallings described the colonel, who later became a major general, as "tougher than an alligator steak, as hard-boiled as a picnic egg." It was largely by virtue of their commander that the 28th was chosen to lead the attack.

After five days of intensive training, aided by photos of German positions taken by French observation planes, the 28th was ready. On May 27, it and the 26th Infantry fought off a German attack to disrupt what the enemy knew must be the build up of American forces. The German effort was beaten back with the loss of only three infantrymen taken prisoner. Not one talked or revealed anything about the next day's plans. At 4: 45 a.m., the Division and French artillery opened up. At 6: 45 a.m., May 28, *Black Lions* went "over the top" of the trenches and began the march of about ten city blocks to Cantigny. The previous night the 1st Engineers had dug trench lines less than 300 meters from the town. As the infantry supported by machine gun battalions advanced, Stokes mortars were put in the trenches. Within 45 minutes, the "Yanks" were in the town and 250 Germans were taken prisoner. The infantrymen dug in for a counterattack. When German artillery opened up, COL Ely called for fire support, not knowing that some of the French artillery had already departed to stop another German offensive further down the front. The Germans advanced on the American lines and were promptly shot down by machine gun and Springfield rifle fire. Through three bitter attacks, the 28th held. All that night and into the next afternoon, German artillery poured in toxic shells and high explosives. COL Ely telephoned General Bullard, "Front line pounded to hell and gone, and entire front line must be relieved tomorrow night or I will not be held responsible."General Bullard dispatched the 16th Infantry to conduct a combat relief, one of the most difficult of all tactical maneuvers. It worked. The German counterattack failed. That night the London Evening News reported, "BRAVO, THE YOUNG AMERICANS! NOTHING IN TODAY'S BATTLE NARRATIVE FROM THE FRONT IS MORE EXHILERATING THAN THE ACCOUNT OF THE FIGHT AT CANTIGNY." The first American victory of the war was a First Division victory.

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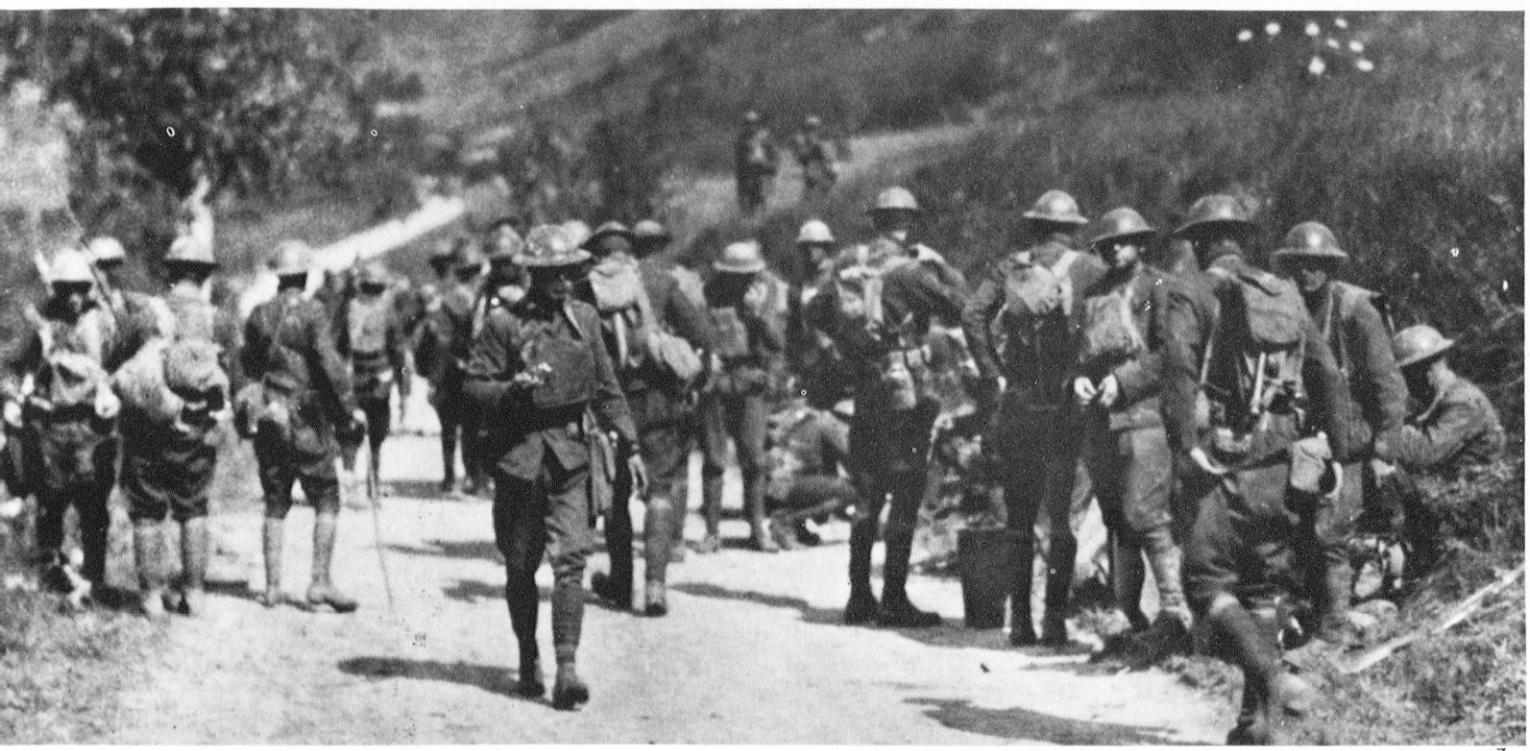
The Allied situation in June, 1918, was critical. The Germans had driven to within 50 miles of Paris and General Pershing cabled Washington that there was a danger of French capitulation. American forces were rushed into Chateau-Thierry to help halt the enemy advance. Thanks to a US machine gun battalion and some tough fighting by the 2d and 3d Divisions, the Germans were forced to halt at the Marne River. On June 10, American I, II, and III Corps were formed. By the fourth of July, one million Americans were in France. On July 15, General Bullard became III Corps commander and Major General Charles P. Summerall moved up from his DivArty post to take command of the Division.

Major General C. P. Summerall Takes Command

National Archives

A YOUNG GERMAN captured during the battle for Cantigny has his finger bandaged by a Lieutenant Shrey. Over 250 prisoners were taken by the Division. Below, men of the 16th Infantry move to positions for the attack on Soissons.



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In July, fourteen German divisions crossed the Marne River. Their advance was doomed. German prisoners had revealed the impending attack. The French fell back in an elastic defense as their artillery tore holes in German supply lines. East of Chateau-Thierry, an American unit was earning its title, the "Rock of the Marne," as it captured 800 prisoners. The Germans were stymied and the war was at a turning point. The stage was set for an Allied counterattack, a bloody affair, in which the First Division was to play a magnificant role at a place called Soissons.

French commander Marshall Ferdinand Foch realized that only the Americans had the stamina to carry out his plan—an attack without artillery preparation to seize the heights dominating the rail network at Soissons and to cut German communication to Chateau-Thierry. He placed the Division along with the US 2d and some Moroccans and French legionaires ready to strike at the base of Soissons.

It had been raining a long time in the Compiegne Forest as the now-toughened First Division troops moved through the darkness into position, early on the morning of July 18. Through seven miles of ooze, the Division pushed forward to a ravine. At dawn, the rain stopped. The infantrymen rose and followed French armor into battle. The 26th and 28th Regiments met ferocious opposition as they moved through waist-deep marshes on which the Germans had preplanned machine gun fire. The 16th and 18th Infantry succeeded in cutting through to the Paris-Soissons highway. By midday, the Division captured 1600 prisoners. The German front was broken. For three more days, the First kept going. Enlisted men commanded many of the companies. All 12 battalion commanders were killed or wounded. The senior officer in the 26th Infantry was a captain with two years service. A PFC named Dan Edwards became the Division's first Medal of Honor winner. He was so badly wounded that records showed him dead. He recovered and became a major after World War II and an active member of the Society of the First Division. By July 22, the Division had fought seven miles into German lines. The enemy burned stores and pulled out. Soissons cost the First over 7,000 men killed or wounded. The French commander sent word, "American comrades! I am thankful to you for the blood so generously spilled on the soil of my country."

A month after Soissons, the Division prepared for the first all-American offensive. The plan called the Saint Mihiel operation, was worked out by a graduate of the Division, now Colonel George C. Marshall, chief of operations, First Army. The First Division along with 15 other American divisions was brought to full combat readiness. Over 665,000 men; 3,220 Allied guns; plus 1500 planes were

FIRST MEDAL OF HONOR winner for the Division was Private First Class Dan Edwards. He was so badly wounded at Soissons that records showed him dead. He recovered, became a major and an active member of the Society of the First Division. He is shown above in 1957.

National Archives

HORSE AND MULE TRAINS bring supplies to the front line during buildup for the Saint Mihiel Offensive, September 11, 1918.

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US Army Signal Corps

DUG IN on the side of a hill in the French Ardennes during the Meuse-Argonne campaign, October 11, 1918, the 18th Infantry waits out German artillery shelling.

set to go. The Germans saw too late that there was no hope and began a retreat. But the Division and other US forces acted too quickly. At 5:00 a.m., September 12, the men of the First went over the top again. Little resistance was met. Germans walked out of their positions to surrender. The 28th Infantry pushed on to link up with a regiment of the 26th Division. By 8:00 a.m., on the 13th, the Saint Mihiel salient was in American hands. In 12 days, the Division would be called on to participate in the last great offensive of the war.

On September 26, the Meuse-Argonne plan was put into effect. Troops of the First Division launched an attack against defenses tougher than they had ever seen. The enemy had established defensive belts ten miles deep into the Argonne Forest. The going was rough. Three miles the first day, but the First Division kept going. In General Orders Number 210 published in November, General Pershing noted, "The Commander in Chief desires to make record of his extreme satisfaction with the conduct of the officers and soldiers of the First Division in its advance west of the Meuse between October 4th and 11th, 1918." In the five-paragraph order, General Pershing lauded the Division for displaying "the highest type of courage, fortitude and self-sacrificing devotion to duty." He concluded, "The Commander in Chief has noted in this division a special pride of service and a high state of morale, never broken by hardship nor battle."

On October 18, Brigadier General Frank Parker became the Division commander. General Summerall moved up to command the Division's parent V Corps while General Bullard was named to head Second Army. A colonel named Teddy Roosevelt, Jr. was commanding the 26th Regiment. On November 5, word reached the men that General Pershing desired Americans to be the first to enter Sedan. He gave the task to I Corps but said V could assist. That was all the hint the Division needed. For 48 hours, men, horses, and guns were moved on the double. First Division troops sponged rations off other men that they passed. In their haste, Division soldiers ran across a high-ranking officer "who looked German." He was immediately taken prisoner. The "German" turned out to be the 42d Division's acting commander, Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur. Division veterans would laugh about the incident for years to come.

General Pershing finally conceded to let the French be the first in the town. On November 11, 1918, the Armistice was signed. The war to end all wars; the war to make the world safe for democracy was over. It had cost the First Division, now called the BIG RED ONE because of their new shoulder patch (see Page 28), a total of 22,320 casualties. Men of the Division had earned five Medals of Honor. The cocky recruits who had boarded the transports for France in 1917 were seasoned soldiers in 1918. The Division crossed the Rhine and began a 10-month occupation of Germany, the first American unit to do so.

On September 10, 1919, General Pershing led what he called "the best damn division in any army" down Fifth Avenue, New York in a tumultuous victory parade. The BIG RED ONE was home. The first chapter in the Division's history had been written—in glory.

The Division Suffered 22,320 Casualties...

Five Men Earned The Medal Of Honor...

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UNDER ENEMY ARTILLERY FIRE, the 16th Infantry moves through the streets of a French town on November 1, 1918. A few days later the Armistice was signed.

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The First Chapter in Division History Had Been Written in Glory....

CROSSING THE ARMISTICE LINE at Etain Meuse, France, the 26th Infantry marches on to occupation duty in Germany. Reviewing the troops are Brigadier General Frank Parker, commander of the Division; Brigadier General Marshall, commander of the 2d Brigade; Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., commander of the 26th Infantry; Captain N. H. Lano of the French Mission; and Major Thomas R. Gowenlock, intelligence officer of the Division.

Courtesy Colonel T. R. Gowenlock

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MAJOR GEORGE W. SIBERT is the fourth member of his immediate family to serve as an officer in the Division.

SFC Frank P. Castro

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THE SIBERT FAMILY

Big Red One

for four generations

ACCORDING TO THE GREAT grandson of the man who organized the Division and led it in France during its initial World War I training, the BIG RED ONE is a source of many memories for the Sibert family. Major George W. Sibert, present Assistant Division Aviation Officer, represents the fourth generation of his family to have served as officers in the Division. All graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Major Sibert's great grandfather, Major General William L. Sibert, commanded the Division from June to December, 1917, prior to becoming Chief of Gas Warfare. MG Sibert graduated from West Point in 1884 and served in the Corps of Engineers. From 1907 to 1914, he was engineer in charge of building the eastern half of the Panama Canal. His efforts were described as "brilliant" by Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall. In 1915 Congress promoted then Lieutenant Colonel Sibert to Brigadier General.

Major General F. C. Sibert, who served as a major in the division commanded by his father, graduated from West Point in 1912 as an infantry lieutenant. He commanded a machine gun battalion in the 16th Infantry during World War I. In World War II, MG Sibert commanded the 6th Infantry Division in the Pacific Theater and later the 10th Corps.

The third member of the family to serve as a Division officer was Colonel F. R. Sibert, father of the present member. COL Sibert was a lieutenant in the 16th Infantry from 1937 to 1938. He is now Director of the Richmond Center of the University of Virginia (Extension).

The latest Sibert to wear the *Big Red One* is Airbrone and Ranger qualified. Major George W. Sibert, 29, of Fort Walton Beach, Fla, states, "It was a foregone conclusion for me," referring to his career and present assignment. Following his training in Army Aviation in 1959, he served with the 8th Infantry Division in Germany and later attended the Engineer Officer's Career Course. From 1964 to 1966, Major Sibert was a graduate student at Princeton University. There he received an MSE Degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He has been in Vietnam since October 1966.

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NO US Division in World War II had higher esprit de corps than did the Big Red One. Just being a part of the 1st Division appeared to exert a special influence on a man.

Historian Charles B. MacDonald

HEADING THE FIGHT AGAIN

THE DAY PEARL HARBOR was attacked, December 7, 1941, the First Division (still carrying the name given it during World War I) had its headquarters at Fort Devens, Mass. In 1939, the famed unit had been reorganized under a streamlined "Triangular" concept with the 16th, 18th, and 26th Infantry Regiments serving as basic components. The 28th Infantry became part of the 8th Division. Each Regiment was considered a "combat team" and consisted of approximately 3,300 infantrymen along with accompanying medical, engineer, signal, ordnance and quartermaster "service troops." The 5th, 6th, and 7th Field Artillery Regiments were incorporated into First Division Artillery and designated as battalions. The 32d and 33d Field Artillery Battalions were created from the 6th Field Artillery Regiment. Thus, Division Artillery was made up of the 5th, 7th, 32d, and 33d Field Artillery Battalions, each with a strength of approximately 550 men. Overall strength of the Division was approximately 15,000. As America readied for a second global war, she called on her most famous division to head the fight again.

The 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry and Division Headquarters departed for English training bases on July 1, 1942. The main force followed aboard the British luxury liner Queen Mary and arrived in Scotland on August 8. On August 19, the BIG RED ONE was officially designated the First Infantry Division. At Tidworth Barracks, England, concentrated amphibious training was begun. In command of the Division was Major General Terry Allen. His assistant was Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., who had commanded the 26th Infantry Regiment during World War I.

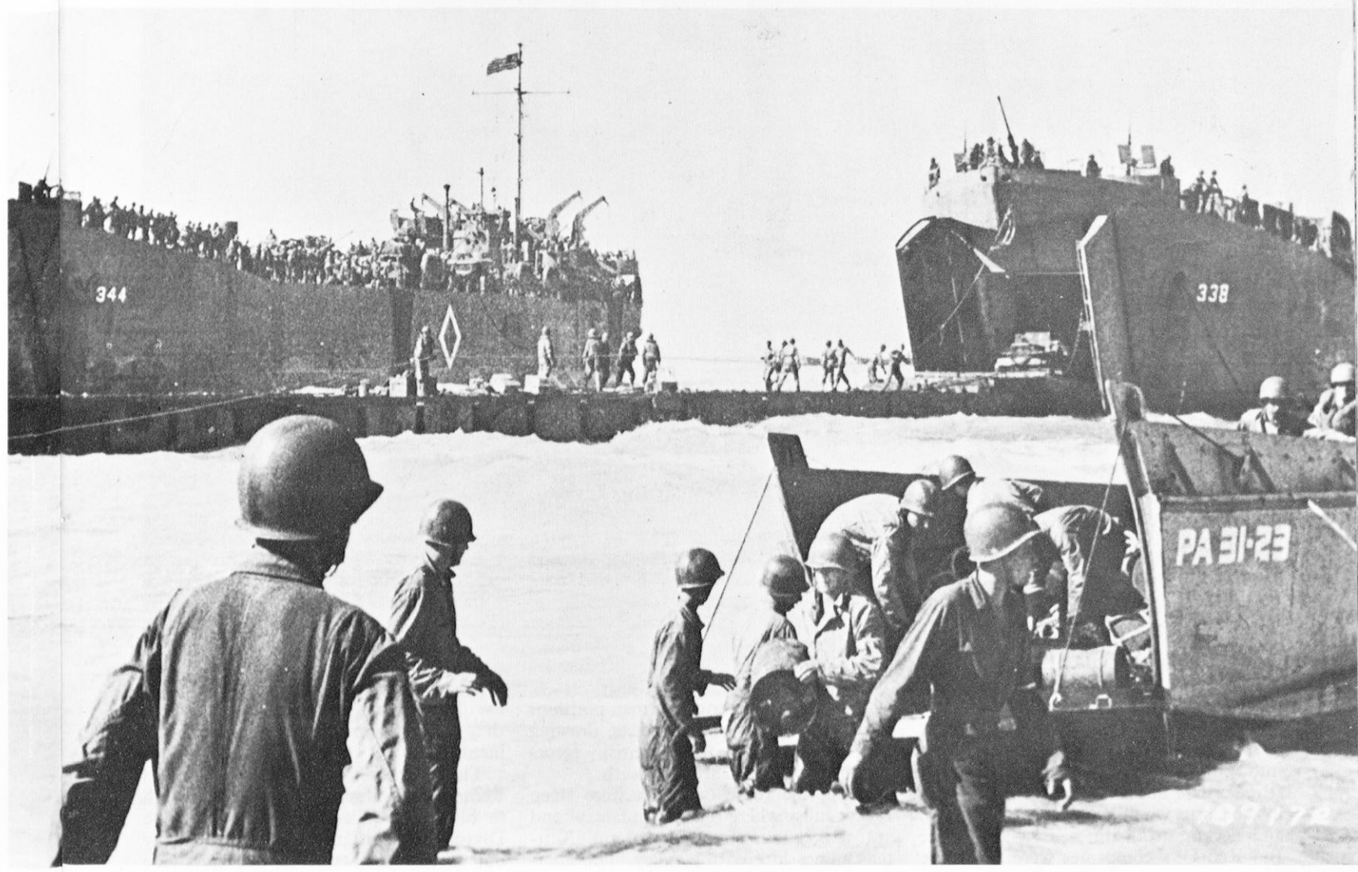
The year 1942 had been particularly gloomy for the Allies. Germany held half of European Russia. Japan, which had knocked out much of the Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, had proceeded to conquer Southeast Asia. In North Africa, General Erwin Rommel had led his famed *Afrika Korps* and Italian forces to within 60 miles of Alexandria, Egypt. British Prime Minister Churchill had flown to the Middle East to encourage British soldiers for a last-ditch stand lest the Suez Canal be captured and the British oil and shipping lifeline along the Mediterranean be lost. Twenty-three days after the BIG RED ONE began training in England, Rommel struck at British lines in a bid for final victory. But the British, under Lieutenant General Bernard L. Montgomery, held steadfast. In a tremendous battle launched October 23, near El Alamein, British forces, though suffering tremendous losses, forced Rommel to withdraw from Egypt. The British pursued.

North Africa represented a source of light in the darkness of enemy oppression. The Allies seized the opportunity to begin the fight to victory in World War II.

On November 6, 1942, Lieutenant General Dwight Eisenhower established his Gibralter headquarters for Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Three task forces were already steaming toward the Mediterranean. General George Patton and his Eastern Force which had come directly from the US would land at Algiers. A combined US-British Western Force would put ashore in French Morocco. The third or Center Task Force would land at Oran, Algeria. Among its 39,000 American troops were the men of the BIG RED ONE. Before dawn on November 8, the Division hit the beaches, an act it would perform many times over the next three years. Said General Eisenhower . . . at Oran "the US 1st Division, which was later to travel such a long battle road in this war, got its first taste of conflict. On November 9, we knew we would soon be able to report victory in that area." By the 10th, after General Allen had told them, "nothing in Hell must delay or stop the First Division," the BIG RED ONE marched into Oran.

Hitler had issued orders for the Germans to put up a desperate defense of North Africa. A day after Allied landings, the enemy build-up had begun in Tunisia. The Division, along with the rest of American II Corps, was assigned to proceed from Algeria toward the Tunisian capital of Tunis by way of a mountainous region called the Western Dorsal. Rommel, having eluded the British after a 1500-mile chase from El Alemein, now decided he could strike a vital blow at the Allies and prolong the North African campaign. He chose February 14, to launch an attack toward the Western Dorsal. German *Panzers* roared across a valley toward the cities of Sbeitla and Kasserine. The Division was pulled back to defend the passes of the Western Dorsal range. Due to confusion in Allied headquarters, US air support was not mounted effectively. By February 18, 1943, Rommel had seized Kasserine and was headed toward Kasserine Pass. In a narrow three-mile gap between the mountains, the Division made a valiant fight, but the Germans kept coming, inflicting particularly heavy casualties on the 26th Infantry. By February 22, German armor was within 20 miles of the main supply and communication point for Allied forces in southern and central Tunisia. With the help of British tanks

INVASION OF NORTH AFRICA begins. The Division, part of the Center Task Force, lands at Oran, Algeria on November 8, 1942.



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TWO SOLDIERS guard the First Division CP during the siege of Oran, Algeria, on November 9, 1942.

and American artillery released from another sector, the Division halted the German advance. On February 23, Rommel withdrew back through Kasserine Pass. The BIG RED ONE had had its first lesson in *blitzkriege* or "lightning war." It was a lesson not to be forgotten.

After the temporary setback at Kasserine, American II Corps had come under command of General Patton. One of his first measures for instilling new life into his men was the enforcement of strict orders about uniforms. Every man in the Corps would wear helmet, leggings, and necktie at all times. Even front-line BIG RED ONE companies were not to be spared the necktie in combat. General Patton personally roamed the command to track down offenders. Enlisted men could be fined up to $25, officers up to $50. By March, the Division welcomed the chance to strike again at Rommel. Their opportunity came on the 16th as II Corps launched a diversionary attack against the right rear of German positions in Southern Tunisia aimed at drawing the enemy away from British forces pushing northward from Mareth.

Along the route of attack were steep rocky hills where enemy infantry and anti-tank gunners were holed up. Anti-tank mines littered the valley. The Division, reinforced with the 1st Ranger Battalion, was assigned the mission of capturing Gafsa and moving east through a mountain corridor to El Guettar. By the night of the 17th, the BIG RED ONE had retaken Gafsa, abandoned a month before during the Kasserine pull back. Italians had withdrawn to the hills beyond the El Guettar date-palm oasis where they went on line with German reinforcements.

The diversion's effectiveness had forced Rommel to send troops from further south to block the advancing Americans. The Division was assigned to clear the enemy out of the mountains on the west side

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of the Gabes road. The enemy resisted fiercely as the BIG RED ONE struggled past vast boulders and crags full of Germans. Then waves of German infantry aided by tanks pushed across the valley. American radio intercept had picked up the German attack orders. US artillery showered the enemy with air bursts. Standing at a Division CP, General Patton muttered, "They're murdering good infantry." With 32 tanks turned into burning hulks, the Germans withdrew. Kasserine Pass had been avenged.

As the British continued their drive north along the east coast of Tunisia, Rommel retreated to Tunis where he became ill and returned to Germany. American II Corps, under the command of General Omar Bradley (Patton had been promoted and taken command of the American 7th Army), moved to the north end of Tunisia opposite Bizerte. Again the Division was faced with taking hills combed with Germans. Its initial objective was to clear what had been dubbed "Mousetrap Valley" because any attempt to take the valley without clearing the hills first would cause the closing of the trap by murderous German anti-tank fire. Attached to the BIG RED ONE was a regiment of armored infantry from the 1st Armored Division. Division trucks were committed to round-the-clock convoys back and forth from the Mediterranean port of Tebarka to build up the supplies needed for the final push. On the eve of the attack, General Bradley visited the Division CP. These were his observations:

"Terry Allen's combat-wise infantrymen with the BIG RED ONE on their

US Army Signal Corps (YANK Magazine)

PATROL BRIEFING occurs following the capture of Gafsa in Southern Tunisia.

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GERMAN TANKS, accompanied by waves of infantry, are knocked out by air bursts fired from US artillery as they try to ouflank First Division troops near El Guettar, Tunisia.

US Army Signal Corps

Division Starts Attack on Good Friday

40,000 Nazis Surrender After 16 Days

shoulders had headquartered on the Beja-Mateur road in a barnyard piled high with steaming manure. Here, more than anywhere else on the line, an air of easy relaxation hid the tension that comes on the eve of attack. Not only was the 1st thoroughly blooded, but it had come overseas better staffed than most divisions.

"The initiative of the 1st Division was apparent even in Allen's mess, where his rough table boasted rare roast beef while the other division CO's made do with conventional tinned rations. The meat, Terry explained, was 'casualty' beef, from cattle accidentally killed by enemy fire. Despite warnings of vets on sick cattle, those casualties happened with suspicious frequency."

On Good Friday, April 23, the Division kicked off its attack. From the beginning, the Germans raked the infantrymen with artillery fire from hills to the north. Many of the companies were cut down to platoon size. Thanks to the 34th Division which took a key hill, the Division roared down the rim of the mousetrap and the II Corps area, under the effect of lightning tank assaults and heavy air attacks, the Germans were reeling. On May 9, Major General Fritz Krause, artillery commander of the *Afrika Korps*, unconditionally surrendered his forces. Some 518 days after Pearl Harbor, the Division had helped force the first surrender of the Nazis. Over 40,000 went into PW cages in the II Corps area.

Across the Mediterranean, 90 miles at its nearest point from Tunisia, was the island of Sicily. Until Nazi air and submarine bases could be eliminated from the island fortress, the English lifeline to Asia through the Suez Canal could not be opened. The Allies also needed seaports and airfields for the overwater jump to Italy. The Sicilian invasion was code-named Operation HUSKY. In it the Division would fight as part of General Patton's 7th Army in General Bradley's II Corps. Combined British and US forces involved totalled 160,000 with 600 tanks and 1800 artillery pieces. Almost 3700 planes would be in support. A German-Italian force of 200,000 with 1400 airplanes waited to oppose the invasion. Corps G-2 reported the Hermann

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ITALIAN PRISONERS are escorted off the beach at Gela, Sicily, after the BIG RED ONE *had overwhelmed initial ressistance in landing on July 10, 1943. Note steel mesh on the beach to support vehicles.*

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Goering Battle Group massing 20 miles from where the First was to land. On July 10, 1943 at exactly 2: 45 a.m., initial waves of BIG RED ONE troops hit the beach at Gela .

The Division made fast work of the preliminary Italian defenses. But, 24 hours later it was feeling the full brunt of a *Panzer* charge aimed at pushing the Americans back into the sea. General Bradley, who had rushed to the scene, paid a glowing tribute to the BIG RED ONE in a later report:

"Near Gela, I found the 1st Division fighting for its life against a *Panzer* counterattack that had almost broken through to the beaches.

"Three months before, Patton had prevailed on Eisenhower to substitute the veteran 1st Division for the 36th on this invasion. In doing so, he may have saved II Corps from a major disaster. As we had anticipated, the burly Hermann Goering *Panzer* Division lunged down the Gela road with its tanks in a bold effort to throw Allen's division back into the sea. I question whether any other US division could have repelled that charge in time to save the beach from tank penetration. Only the perverse BIG RED ONE was both hard and experienced enough to take that assault in stride. A greener division might easily have panicked and seriously embarrassed the landing."

During the fierce action, Division infantrymen had been bowled over by the on-charging tanks as their own anti-tank and artillery weapons were still being dragged ashore. Twenty German Mark IVs headed down the road toward Gela; another 40 had cut across the Division front attempting to converge with the other German column. Every gun in the BIG RED ONE was ordered rolled into position to fire point-blank at the enemy armor. Meanwhile, regimental teams let the tanks roll by but did not pull back. Instead they picked off German grenadiers moving behind the armor. The hastily assembled artillery combined with powerful Naval gunfire knocked out 30 of the German tanks. Later in the afternoon Naval guns again helped beat back another German attack. What was left of the Axis force retreated into the hills. The enemy had come within 2,000 yards of the beach, but no further. The First was in Sicily to stay.

After Gela, the Division struck out westward through the center of the country. When British forces moving up the eastern side of Sicily were delayed by heavy *Panzer* defensive tactics, II Corps and the BIG RED ONE were turned east to link with the British for a combined drive up the neck of the island. On July 20, the slow advance over rough mountain terrain began. At the end of the month, the Division halted outside the town of Troina, a key hilltop enemy defense post.

On August 1, the veteran BIG RED ONE forces attacked down the road to the town which was bordered on both sides by low hills. German counterattacks pushed back the initial advance. Intelligence indicated the enemy was counting on two escape roads, one to the south and one due east of Troina. The 26th Infantry moved to hit one of the roads from the north, while the 16th and 18th Regiments moved south around the base of the town. The Germans were dug in so well that infantry efforts alone could not discharge them. In six days, Division forces held off 24 counterattacks. Orders went out for the regiments to hold up while the town was blasted with all available air and artillery. Eighteen artillery battalions effected devastating damage supported by flights of 36 fighter bombers using 500-pound ordnance. Even after the barrage, remnants of enemy forces remained to counterattack the Division again. By August 6, the majority of German forces, many unhurt, had pulled back. The 16th

CAPTURED GERMAN VEHICLE is put to use by BIG RED ONE *troops in the town of Enna as the Division begins its move up the center of Sicily.*

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THE ADVANCE WAS SLOW over rocky mountain terrain toward the town of Troina, a key enemy defense post.

US Army Signal Corps

Infantry scaled up the side of the town under bitter rear-guard resistance. General Eisenhower later described the battle as "one of the most fiercely fought smaller actions of the war."

As the Sicilian campaign neared its end, General Bradley stated, "In Sicily as in Tunisia, the 1st Division had set the pace for the ground campaign. In quality the 1st was worth the equal of several inexperienced divisions. It has become an almost irreplaceable weapon for the Normandy invasion." After 24 straight days of fighting, the Division halted at Troina. In many of the platoons, sergeants were in command for lack of officer replacements. Staff Sergeant Robert J. Kemp of Fenelton, Pa, a member of G Company, 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, had led a platoon in the capture of a knoll. He described the typical action matter of factly: "We crawled up as close as we could. We got picked up by the enemy at about 300 yards. They kept firing, firing, bullets whizzing all over the place—lots of 'burp guns'—machine-pistols. We closed in to about twenty-five yards. Then we jumped up, and gave a whoop, yell and holler, threw grenades, ran in and hollered some more. We killed a few of them—I killed one myself with a tommygun—and all the rest took off and ran in different directions, all confused. That's the way you usually make a bayonet charge."

On August 17, US and British forces entered Messina at the northern-most tip of Sicily. Many Germans had slipped across to Italy where they would fight again. But the eyes of the Allies were now turning to the shores of France and a cross-channel invasion. In the hills of Troina, Major General Clarence Heubner took command of the BIG RED ONE. He had enlisted in 1910 and been commissioned in World War I. He had worn every rank from private to colonel while with the First. Now he was to lead it to England for training and then to Europe in the greatest Allied offensive of the war. When the Division returned to England in November, 1943, Allied forces in Italy were being held up by toughened German

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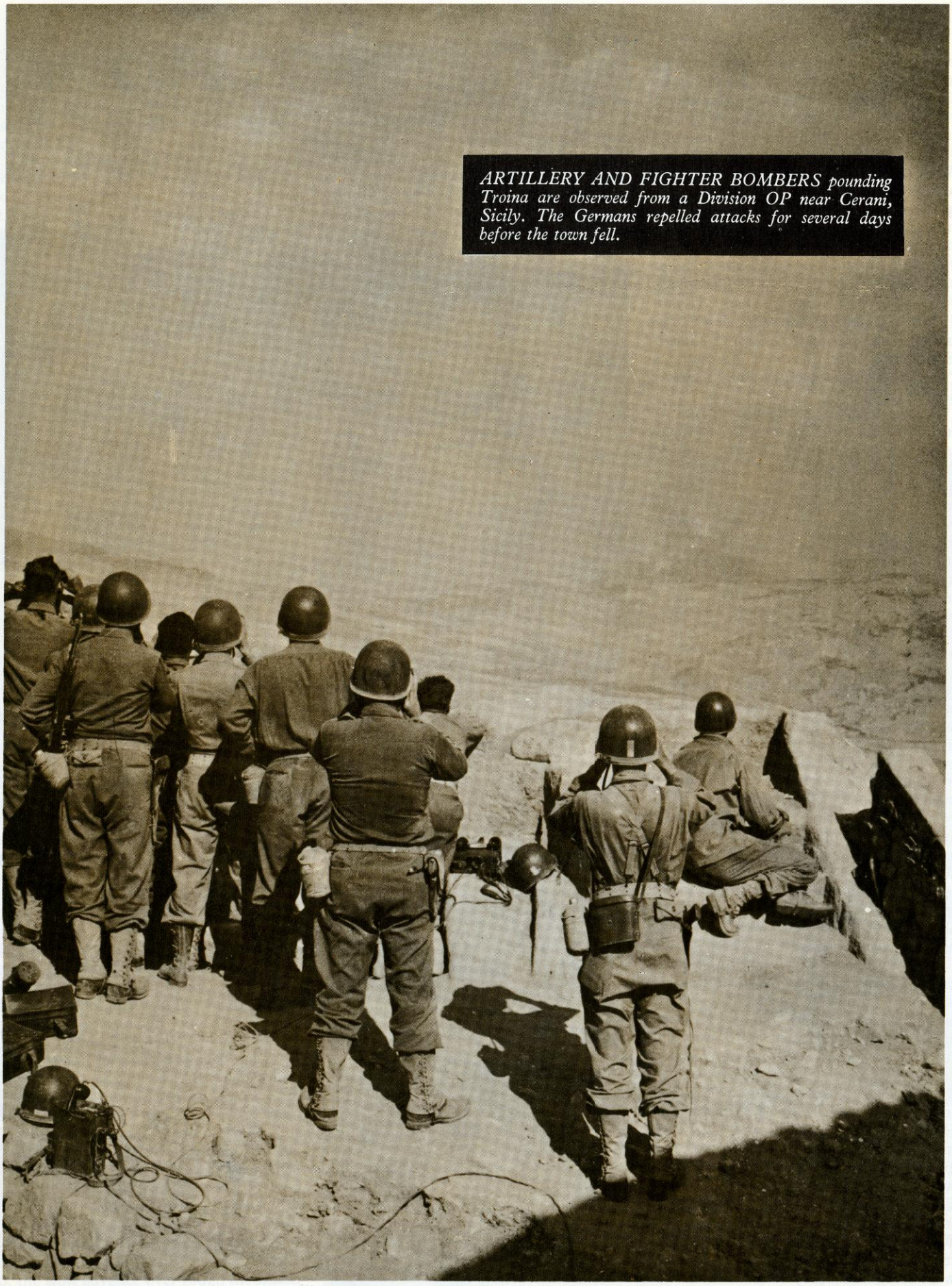

ARTILLERY AND FIGHTER BOMBERS pounding Troina are observed from a Division OP near Cerani, Sicily. The Germans repelled attacks for several days before the town fell.

US Army Signal Corps

resistance outside Rome. After Mussolini abdicated, Italy had surrendered, but the Nazis quickly took over the country. In Russia, Hitler still held Leningrad. The bulk of the Western Pacific was in Japanese hands. Roosevelt and Churchill approved what they hoped was a plan to end the war. It would be called Operation OVERLORD, the mightiest land, sea, and air invasion ever mounted. The BIG RED ONE would again be called to lead the American forces.

On June 3, 1944, BIG RED ONE troops were in ships at three embarkation points. The initial assault element (Force "0") consisted of the 16th and 18th Regimental Combat Teams reinforced with the 115th and 116th RCT's of the 29th Division plus artillery, armor, engineer and service units. Over 34,000 men were under operational control of the Division. The BIG RED ONE was to land at Normandy, France, secure a beachead between Port-en-Bessin and the Vire River and then push southward toward St Lo. A second assault force ("B") with over 25,000 men including the 26th Regimental Combat Team was to hit the beach by noon.

The 15th German Army in the Normandy Sector was on a partial alert status. They had taken normal defense measures including construction of gun emplacements and wire entanglements. The beach was filled with underwater obstacles and mines. Sea walls had been extended and anti-personnel and anti-tank mines laid in fields ranging to 300 yards in depth. Force "0" arrived off the coast at 2:30 a.m., D-Day, June 6. By 5:30, the first troops, packed into assault landing craft with their weapons, gas masks, rations, grenades and up to 250 rounds apiece, headed for the beach. The 116th RCT passed men floundering in the surf, their amphibious tanks swamped by three to four foot waves or shot up by enemy fire. Overcast skies reduced the effectiveness of air and naval bombardment and German gun emplacements were hardly touched. Army-Navy engineer teams could manage only six gaps blown through all the beach obstacles and three partial gaps. Two gaps were in the 116th RCT landing area; the other four were on "Easy Red" Sector where the 16th Infantry was located.

THE NORMANDY INVASION was the mightiest land, sea and air assault ever attempted. Overcast skies above Omaha Beach had reduced the effectiveness of the air and naval preparatory fire (below) leaving many German emplacements untouched.

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The first waves of BIG RED ONE *troops headed for the beach aboard assault landing craft at 5:30 a.m. on D Day, June 6, 1944. Landings continued for 14 hours as troops and supplies were brought ashore (below). The men were under fire from the minute they left the landing craft.*

On the beach, an exhausted member of the 16th Infantry finds brief refuge behind a sea wall (right) as heavy German shelling continues. Medics worked feverishly to rescue men from the sea and aid the wounded on the beaches (lower right). By midnight, June 6, the Division had conquered a strip of beach nearly six miles long.

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Most of the landing craft ran aground short of the Normandy beach and were under heavy fire. Many BIG RED ONE troops leaped over the side rather than risk being killed as the gates of the craft were dropped. Stiff and weak from seasickness, the men stumbled ashore (proper assault technique calls for an all-out dash to shore) with over 200 yards to go before they could reach a protective sea wall. In "Easy Red" Sector, over a mile long, both Company E and F, 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry landed far east of their mark. Many men were killed in the water or wounded as they dragged buddies ashore. Enemy snipers and machine gunners concentrated on officers and NCOs. The 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry landed at 7: 30 a.m., and became badly intermingled with its sister 2d Battalion. The 16th Regiment's Executive Officer and other men of the command group were killed coming ashore. Colonel George Taylor, the CO, made it. He told his men later while under heavy fire, "We're being killed here on the beach; let's get inland and be killed." Groups of men were collected together regardless of unit and sent through the cleared lanes under charge of the nearest NCO. By nightfall, the 1st and 2d Battalions, 16th Infantry had pushed inland near Colleville-sur-Mer. The 3d Battalion was moving east on the way to Port-en-Bessin. The 18th Infantry had waited for the beach to be partially cleared and then hit out for "Easy Red." By 12: 30 p.m., they were on the edge of Colleville and by midnight had cut the Colleville-Vierville road.

The 26th Infantry, with Force "B," did not land until 7: 30 p.m. It moved to protect the left flank of the 16th Infantry. One battalion (3d) went into a defensive position on the road from St Laurent to Formigny. Artillery began landing at

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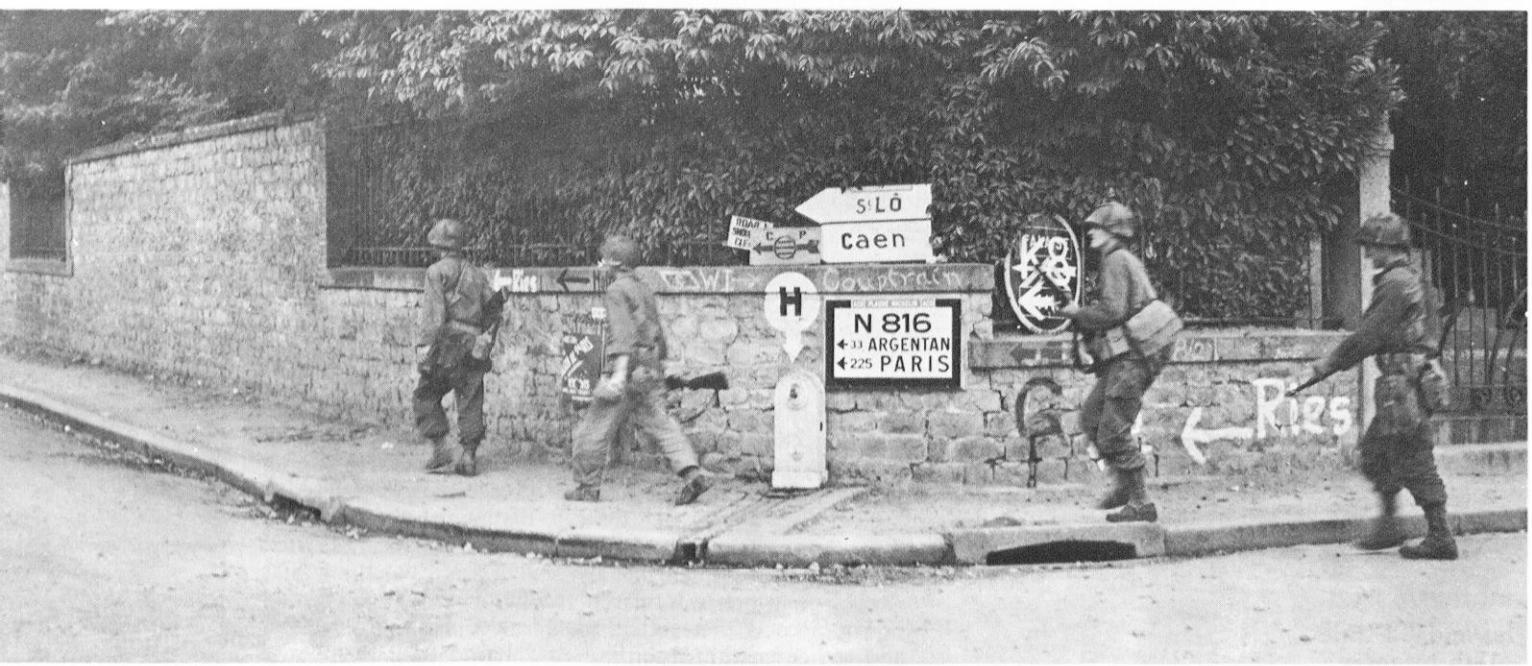

IN FRANCE after the invasion, the Division moved south to seal off Brittany. At left, Private Joseph E. Richard guards an anti-tank gun in shell-torn Caumont. By August, the BIG RED ONE *began a push through the heart of the country (above), meeting little opposition.*

4:00 p.m. and helped support the 16th Infantry. By midnight June 6, the Division had conquered a beach strip 10,000 yards wide with the deepest penetration being 3,000 yards. Three men had won the Medal of Honor during the time: John Linder had two wounds but went back in the surf four times to rescue a vital radio and parts. Lieutenant Jim Monteith, though severly wounded, led repeated charges on German positions. Private Barnett Carlton rescued men from drowning and saved others on the beach. General Huebner and BG Willard G. Wyman set up their command post, "Danger Forward," in a German fortification above the beach. On D+1 Day, General Eisenhower pinned 22 DSCs on men of the Division and told them, "I would not have started this invasion without you."

The German General Staff had at first refused to believe that the Normandy landings were more than a feint to draw German troops away from a better beach site. The Allies siezed the opportunity to capture the vital port of Cherbourg. For three weeks the Division moved through the Normandy hedgerows and struggled to the St Lo Road to prepare to seal off Brittany. By July 10, Operation COBRA was put into effect. General Bradley called it "the most decisive battle of our war in Western Europe." By July 27, the Division had broken into the outskirts of Courtanies. By August the entire German 7th Army was cut off. After a battle at Mortain, the BIG RED ONE pushed westward nearly unopposed through the heart of France. It bypassed Paris and moved on through Belgium where 17,000 German prisoners were taken at Mons. By the second week in September, 1944, after losing 2,213 killed and 6,347 wounded, the BIG RED ONE had gone across the German border on the edge of a town called Aachen. The Division had helped push the German Army back into its homeland.

After days of waiting for fuel and other supplies to catch up after the rapid advance from Normandy, the attack on Aachen began on October 2. The fortress city had been ordered held at all cost by Adolph Hitler. Through attack and bitter counterattack, the Division got its first taste of street fighting. Grenades and rifle butts were the principal weapons as much of the action was hand-to-hand. On October 14, the city was surrounded. Four days later, Aachen—the symbol of German resistance, birthplace of the Emperor Charlemagne, capital of the Holy Roman Empire, site of the coronation of 32 emperors and kings — had fallen. The surrender was made to the 26th Infantry, commanded by then Lieutenant Colonel John T. Corley (he later became a brigadier general). The German Commander, Colonel Whilch, declared afterwards, "Germany is washed up!" As the bitter German winter set in, the First and 53 other Allied divisions maintained a 500-mile front from the North Sea to the Swiss border. Enemy strength, although the Reich had suffered horrible losses, amounted to 32 divisions under orders to fight to the death for the fatherland.

—continued on page 30—

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1st and 2d Bns
2d Infantry

1st and 2d Bns
16th Infantry

1st and 2d Bns
18th Infantry

1st Bn
26th Infantry

1st and 2d Bns
28th Infantry

1st Sq 4th Cavalry

1st Bn 5th Arty

1st Bn 7th Arty

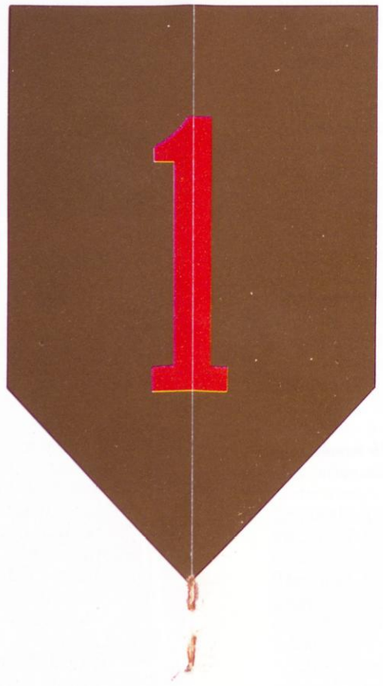
2d Bn 33d Arty

1st Brigade

THE BIG RED ONE PATCH

TWO LEGENDS HAVE EMERGED in answer to the question, "how did the BIG RED ONE patch originate?" The first story has it that during World War I, Division supply trucks were of English manufacture so drivers painted a huge figure "1" on each truck to distinguish their vehicles from those of the Allies. Later, Division engineers carried the measure a step further by sewing a red patch on their sleeves on which was placed the number "1."

The second more-often-quoted tale involves a general and a lieutenant. According to this version, during the build-up and training days of 1917, a general officer decided that the Division needed a suitable shoulder insignia. He proceeded to cut a crude numeral "1" from a ragged suit of his red flannel underwear. He then sewed the number on his uniform sleeve. When a brash young lieutenant saw the red numeral, he shouted, "the general's underwear is showing!" The general shouted back," all right young man, if you're so smart, come up with something better." The lieutenant produced a prototype of today's patch, using a piece of cloth (probably grey) from a captured soldier's uniform as a background on which he placed the red "1."



In October, 1918, the patch as it is known now, a red "1" on a solid olive background, was officially approved for wear by members of the Division. In Vietnam, where new camouflage measures have forced some other units into revamping their insignia, the BIG RED ONE patch remains unaltered on the left shoulder of each man's uniform. Proudly worn, the patch symbolizes the tradition binding present members of the "Fighting First" with those who wore the BIG RED ONE in World Wars I and II.

Also shown on this page are crests of the units comprising the Division today.

2d Brigade

3d Brigade

Division Artillery

8th Bn 6th Arty

Hqs and Hqs Co

1st Engineer Bn

1st Aviation Bn

121st Signal Bn

701st Maint Bn

Support Command

1st S and T Bn

1st Medical Bn

DIVISION ENGINEERS construct a pontoon bridge across a German river in late 1944.

The Battle of the Bulge...

Along with the rest of First Army, the Division prepared to attack north of the Ardennes Forest and to punch to the Rhine where it would seize crossings. The initial attack was preceeded by weeks of miserable rain and cold. The first wet snow had begun falling. Then on November 17, the weather cleared long enough to allow 2400 bombers to soften up targets ahead of where the Division would go. Even this devastating display of air power, the largest bombing attack of the war, failed to tear a hole in the German lines. In two weeks, the BIG RED ONE managed to slug seven miles. Ahead lay the Roer River and behind it the Rhine separated by perfect tank country. There Germans controlled the Roer Dams and could unleash a flash flood to hold off any US advance. The Division was turned through a small lot of woodland called the Huertgen Forest, part of a great forest mass 20 miles long and ten miles wide. The objective was to push through the forest to the dams, but it was an objective not to be met. Though the forest looked peaceful, its 100-foot tall firs obliterating the sky, the Germans had interlaced it with mines of all descriptions and part of the Siegfried line bunkers were there too. In two weeks, after a gain of four miles, the Division suffered 4,000 casulaties. The 26th Infantry had 163 men killed and 261 missing, many of whom were later declared killed. The Division had done all it could, but the Germans had gained what they wanted—time. At 5: 00 a.m., December 16, 24 German divisions, ten of them armored, pushed forward in a great counterattack in the Ardennes sector. In a last-ditch effort, the enemy had put all his available men in a drive aimed at capture of the port of Antwerp, Belgium. If successful, he would cut off four Allied armies from their supplies and possibly cause the Allies to sue for peace. The initial bulge created in the Allied lines caused reporters to dub the action, "The Battle of the Bulge."

After a month of Huertgen fighting, the First was short of men and bone tired. Some of its veterans had fought all the way from North Africa to Germany. In the "Bulge," however, the BIG RED ONE would live up to the praise it had earned as a proud, determined, and never-say-die outfit. It swung into action to hit the German Sixth SS *Panzer* Army flank from the north while General George Patton's Third Army dug in. Digging in meant breaking through icy ground in freezing weather. In *Battle: The Story of the Bulge,* author John Toland told how at 5: 00 a.m., December 17, a German paratroop leader who had just dropped into position, heard American trucks rumbling toward him.

BG John T. Corley, WW II commander of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry.

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WARY OF SNIPERS, BIG RED ONE *infantrymen move through a shell-wracked German town. By May 8, 1945, when the Axis surrendered, the Division had crossed through Germany to Cheb, Czechoslovakia.*

US Army Signal Corps

"He saw a long line of trucks with infantrymen wearing a big red "1." He thought, this was the elite American 1st Division, a hard enemy. These overworked veterans had been yanked out of bed in the middle of the night and packed into open trucks." On December 20, some of the fiercest "Bulge" fighting occurred when as the Germans temporarily pierced the Division defenses with their huge tanks—larger than any American Sherman. Infantrymen rushed to the gap, destroying tanks with bazookas and picking off the Germans dressed in white coveralls. Corporal Henry F. Warner, 2d Battalion, 26th Infantry, a 57 mm antitank gunner from Troy, N. Y., ignored the fire and destroyed a lead tank. His second round damaged another, then with a 45 cal pistol, he killed the tank commander of a third armored monster. Warner was killed the following day. He was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously. By the day after Christmas, the *Panzer* attacks were stopped. A month later, what was left of the German army retreated through the snow further into their country.

In December 1944, Major General Heubner left the Division to take command of V Corps. Major General Clift Andrus was named new Division commander.

On March 16, 1945, the Division crossed the Rhine over the captured Remagen Bridge. By May 8, when the Germans surrendered, the BIG RED ONE had moved all the way across the border to Cheb, Czechoslovakia. Over 50,000 men had worn the BIG RED ONE patch during World War II. Casualties totalled 21,023. Division members had won 16 Medals of Honor and 161 Distinguished Service Crosses. For ten years, the men of the BIG RED ONE were to remain in the land they had conquered, not as conquerors, but as friends. Their patch had become a symbol of the will, the fortitude, the guts, and the effectiveness of the American fighting man.

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SS6 Bob Thomas

SGM WOOLDRIDGE

Two distinguished noncommissioned officers who served most of their careers in the Division hold positions today that are

TOPS IN THE ARMY

121st Signal Battalion

SGM DOBOL

TWO MEN WHO SERVED with the BIG RED ONE in World War II and throughout most of their distinguished careers are today the Army's two top noncommissioned officers.

Sergeant Major William O. Wooldridge, a 14-year Division veteran, became the first Sergeant Major of the Army, the service's top enlisted post, in July, 1966. Sergeant Major Theodore L. Dobol, called "Mr. Blue Spader" because of his long service with the 26th Infantry, now serves as Sergeant Major of the III Regiment, Corps of Cadets, at the United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.

SGM Wooldridge entered the Army in 1940. He joined the 26th Regiment of the BIG RED ONE in May, 1942, and remained with the 26th until the end of the war in Europe.

In 1944, SGM Wooldridge landed on Normandy Beach early on the morning of June 6, under heavy fire. He considered the D-Day landing just another job for the Division. Behind his confidence was a belief that "We have always had good leaders. I think we have always been blessed with these."

After the war, SGM Wooldridge went to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. In 1947, he was assigned to Headquarters, Eighth Army in Japan. From 1948 to 1954 he served again with the BIG RED ONE in Germany. In 1954, he was reassigned to the 3d Infantry Regiment at Fort Meyer, Va. In 1955 he rejoined the Division and the 26th Infantry at Fort Riley.

In 1956, Wooldridge became Sergeant Major of the 2d Battle Group, 28th Infantry at Fort Riley and accompanied the unit to Germany in 1958. In 1962, he was appointed Sergeant Major of the 24th Infantry Division in Augsburg, Germany. He returned to the BIG RED ONE to become Division Sergeant Major in August 1965. He arrived in Vietnam with the Division's main body in October.

On June 28, 1966, SGM Wooldridge left for Washington to become the first Sergeant Major of the Army. In his new job, he serves as personal assistant to the Army Chief of Staff, General Harold K. Johnson, for matters relating to enlisted personnel. Of SGM Wooldridge, General Johnson has stated, "He epitomizes the spirit, courage and dedication of the United States Army soldier today."

SGM Theodore Dobol was a member of the BIG RED ONE for over 25 years with the 26th Infantry. During the campaigns of World War II, Dobol was awarded four Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars and five Purple Hearts. He is the senior Sergeant Major in the Army. Dobol joined the Army in 1938. His first assignment was with the 14th Infantry Division in Panama. He joined the 26th Infantry in 1940, trained with it until the BIG RED ONE departed for England in 1942 and later participated in the fight for North Africa and Sicily.

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, he hit the shore at Normandy near Colleville-sur-Mer and was wounded. After recovering he rejoined the 26th as it moved deep into France. He won a fourth Oak Leaf Cluster to his Silver Star and was wounded again near Vaucelles. He recovered just in time to participate in the taking of Aachen, the first German city to fall to the Allied forces.

After World War II, the *Blue Spaders* remained in Germany as part of the Division occupational force. In 1950, Dobol became the regiment's Sergeant Major. He returned to the United States with his unit and settled at Fort Riley in 1955. In 1959, the unit went again to Germany and, in 1962, was transferred back to Fort Benning, Georgia. In the summer of 1962, Dobol was reassigned to the 1st Battle Group, 5th Infantry at Fort Riley. He returned to the BIG RED ONE a few months later.

In June, 1965, SGM Dobol was appointed to serve in his present position at West Point. Since then, he has maintained loyal contact with the 26th Infantry. He came to Vietnam in August, 1966 to visit the *Blue Spaders* at the invitation of LTC Paul F. Gorman, the Battalion Commander.

In October, 1966, at ceremonies at Baraboo, Wisc, the town that adopted the 26th Infantry, Dobol was there to proudly reflect on his 25 years as a member of the *Blue Spaders,* 17 of which were spent as Sergeant Major.

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IN SICILY (above), 1943, Dobol poses with his squad from the 26th Infantry. At West Point today (right), he talks to a class of cadets.

121st Signal Battalion

Murphy

CONGRATULATIONS are offered by General W. C. Westmoreland (left) as SGM Wooldridge leaves Vietnam to assume the top enlisted post, June 28, 1966. Below he talks with SP4 Greg Graeff during a recent visit to "Danger Forward."

SSG Bob Thomas

WORLD WAR II COMMANDER, General Huebner (right) ▶ talks with the two top NCOs.

Bridgehead Sentinel

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US Army Signal Corps

ARRIVAL IN VIETNAM occurs July 12, 1965 at Vung Tau for the 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry.

INTO A NEW KIND OF WAR

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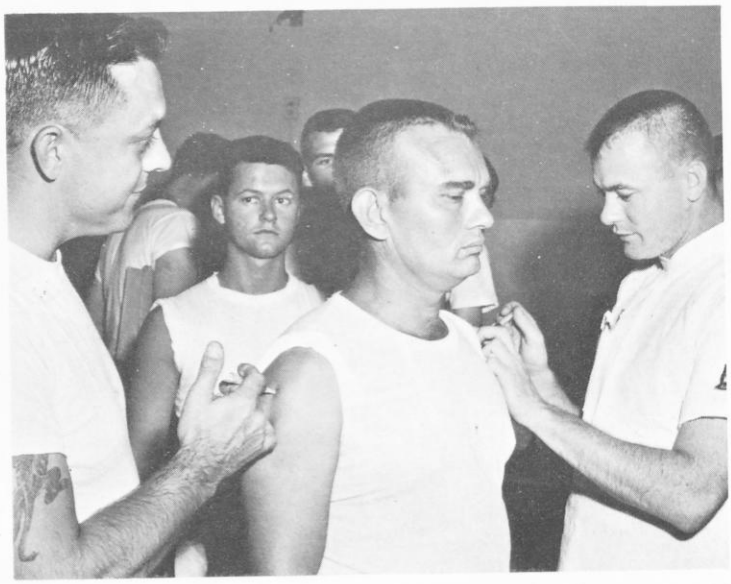
Color Photos by SFC Frank P. Castro

JUNGLE CLEARING goes on by men of the 1st Engineers using a "Rome" plow as the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry assaults into the village of Tan Hiep during Operation Manhattan, *in May, 1967. Choppers from the 1st Aviation Battalion move out overhead.*

SP5 John G. Gudjohnson



DEPARTURE FROM RILEY meant getting shots, saying goodbye to loved ones, and boarding plane to California. Equipment followed by rail.

SP4 Morris W. Hall

SP5 Terrance L. Tomer

US Army Signal Corps

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121st Signal Battalion

"Whether this fight is long or short, we . . . will carry out every mission to a succesful completion whatever the cost or sacrifice."

Major General Jonathan O. Seaman

MG Seaman commanded the Division from January, 1964, to March, 1966. He guided the BIG RED ONE *through training at Fort Riley and led it in combat for six months in Vietnam. He then took command of II Field Force, Vietnam.*

FACED WITH INCREASING AGGRESSION from Communist North Vietnam and widespread terrorist and guerilla activities of the Viet Cong, the Government of South Vietnam asked the Free World for assistance in the late 1950's. The United States responded by sending military advisors to work with the South Vietnamese armed forces. By 1965, the situation had reached the point where regular US units had to be called into the battle if South Vietnam was not to be overrun by the Communists. The first US Army division to meet the challenge was quite naturally the BIG RED ONE.

On Easter Sunday, April 18, 1965, Colonel James E. Simmons, the commander of the 2d Brigade, was notified at Fort Riley, Kansas, that his unit would be the first US Army ground force to be deployed from the continental US. The remainder of April and May was spent preparing for the move. The Brigade Task Force, to be deployed as an independent unit, was augmented with other units of the Division.

In early June, the Brigade began loading equipment on flat cars. On the 21st, it departed by rail and plane to California. Arriving at San Francisco International Airport in full combat gear, the troops were transported to the Oakland Terminal where MG Jonathan O. Seaman, commander of the Division, bade them farewell. Except for an advance party which departed Fort Riley on June 20 to travel by air to Vietnam, the entire Brigade (nearly 4,000 men) moved by sea aboard the USNS Gordon. The Brigade's equipment was loaded on three other ships which left a few days after the Gordon.

On June 25, the lead elements of the BIG READ ONE passed under the Golden Gate Bridge. Soon after departure, the men were officially informed of their destination, by LTC Edgar N. Gltozbach, the Brigade Executive Officer. Shipboard days were spent in training, card playing and physical conditioning under crowded conditions as the men speculated on the country and the days ahead.

On July 12, 1965, the men saw land for the first time in Southeast Asia. Exactly 23 years and 11 days after the advance detachment of the BIG RED ONE had sailed for England in World War II, the first troops of the Division sent to Vietnam went ashore at Cam Ranh Bay. The first element to make the short run to the beach aboard Army ICM's was B Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, led by Captain Phillip A. Pryor. The rest of the Battalion, commanded by LTC Norman J. Salisbury followed, plus members of the 1st Engineer Battalion and the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery. All were greeted on the beach by COL Simmons, the Brigade Commander, and by BG John Norton, Deputy Commander of US forces in Vietnam.

The Gordon then sailed south to deliver the rest of the 2d Brigade to the port city of Vung Tau. There the Brigade was greeted by GEN W.C. Westmoreland, commander of US forces in Vietnam.

The 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, commanded by LTC Lloyd Burke, was followed ashore by the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry, commanded by LTC John Haugen and the 1st Battaion, 7th Artllery, commanded by LTC John Fye III. Other units were C Company, 1st Medical Battalion; B Company, 701st Maintenance Battalion, B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion; and elements of the 1st Supply and Transportation Battalion; 1st Military Police Company and 121st Signal Battalion. From Vung Tau, the Brigade moved to a site south of Bien Hoa to begin the task of carving out a base camp.

The Viet Cong wasted little time in testing the newly arrived infantrymen. At 17 minutes past midnight on July 17, the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry *"Vanguards"* came under heavy mortar fire from an unknown size force of Viet Cong. This marked the first time that soldiers of the 1st Infantry had been under fire since World War II. The next day, the BIG RED ONE lost its first man Killed. For the following six nights, the Battalion was under attack and sustained light casualties from VC small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire. Having proven themselves in defensive positions, the infantrymen began sending out patrols while the construction work continued on their base camps. SSG Frank M. Semens was leading his squad when they surprised a small group of VC in a clearing. In the brief fight that followed, one Viet Cong was killed. This was the first confirmed VC killed for the 2d Brigade and the Division. The BIG RED ONE had indeed arrived.

During the last week in August, the 2d Brigade was conducting operations across the river from the Bien Hoa Air Base in an area honey-combed with bunkers and tunnels. During a firefight, the VC in one of the bunkers put up stiff resistance. Through a hail of small arms and automatic weapons fire, SP4 Wayne Beck of Rolla, Mo., charged and overran the bunker with his flame thrower. For this act of valor, Specialist Beck was later presented the Silver Star by General Seaman. This was the first Silver Star to be won by a Division soldier in Vietnam.

The 1st and 3d Brigades were at sea on their way to join the 2d Brigade. With them were Division Artillery, headquarters, supply and maintenance units. Nearly three weeks on the Pacific, a trip that few will ever forget—the long lines for chow, for movies, for the PX—brought the Division to Vung Tau, the port which had greeted the first elements three months before.

After arrival, the men were air-lifted to a staging area near Bien Hoa before moving to scattered base camps. Although

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JUSPAO

PATROLS made first contact with the enemy, while construction work was underway on base camps for the newly arrived Division.

the 2d Brigade did not officially join the Division until November 1, the BIG RED ONE was together again. The men of the 2d Brigade were overjoyed at the sight of the new faces. Old friends were reunited. Now upwards of 14,000 men were wearing the BIG RED ONE patch in Vietnam.

MG Johnthan O. Seaman, who had commanded since January, 1964, told them, "Our motto is not taken lightly by any one of us. Whether this fight be long or short, we of the Fighting First will carry out every mission to a successful completion whatever the cost or sacrifice. The men who are landing here will benefit greatly by the experiences of the 4,000 men of the 2d Brigade who arrived in July. I assure you that the entire Division will add significantly to its glorious history."

The new arrivals were called upon to fight the enemy, build base camps, and become accustomed to the hot climate and new terrain at the same time. They soon learned that there were no front lines—no secure areas. The enemy could be anywhere at any time. New tactics and techniques had to be mastered to cope with this new type of war.

From its staging area near Bien Hoa, the Division was transferred to its new home in the III Corps area north of Saigon. Di An, some 20 miles north of Saigon, became the site for Division Headquarters. Here also was headquarters for the 121st Signal Battalion, 1st Engineer Battalion, 1st Military Police Company and other support units. The 1st Brigade moved to Phouc Vinh, the 3d Brigade to an abandoned rubber plantation at Lai Khe and Division Artillery and the 1st Aviation Battalion found their home at Phu Loi. The 2d Brigade base camp remained south of Bien Hoa.

Each unit had its own problem in constructing a home. There was jungle to clear, water to be drained, bunkers to be built and tents to be erected. The monsoon rain nearly washed it all away. The weather in Vietnam seemed to come in two varieties—hot and dry, or hot and wet. Quite a change from the Kansas Prairie.

The BATTLE OF BAU BANG on November 12, 1965, was the BIG RED ONE's first major fight in Vietnam. Here during a road runner operation, elements of the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry, A Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry; and C Battery, 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery, fought off an estimated force of 1200 VC. The battle occurred near the village of Bau Bang north of Lai Khe on Highway 13, a road which would soon become familiar to everyone in the BIG RED ONE as the sight of numerous Division victories.

The battle began with an early morning VC mortar attack on the Division forces which were drawn up in a tight defensive perimeter. An enemy frontal assault followed and was repelled. A second and a third attack were also beaten back. The VC made their deepest penetration when they got close enough to the Artillery battery to lob grenades into powder of one of the guns. After the third attack was thrown back, the VC committed their heaviest assault of the day into the open tubes of the artillery. The artillerymen lowered their guns and fired directly into the attackers.

As the battle raged, LTC George M. Suffer, Jr, CO of the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry called on B Company of the 2d Infantry and A Company of the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry to join the battle in an attempt to catch the VC in a pincer movement. The enemy attack weakened under the onslaught of an overpowering hail of cavalry, artillery and infantry firepower until it dissipated into the woods to the northeast.

Then the Air Force and armed helicopters took over. As the artillery covered the possible avenues of escape, the Air Force pounded the disorganized enemy elements with napalm, machinegun fire, rockets and bombs. When the VC broke contact and fled, 198 of them were left dead on the battle area.

LTC Suffer said, "The cavalry, artillery and infantry units blended perfectly in warding off the attacks. There wasn't a weak spot in the fight as far as our men were concerned."

And there were few weak spots to be found in the entire First Division as time would tell.

Division's First Battle Claims 198 VC Lives...

Constant patrolling, search-and-destroy efforts, and brief but fierce firefights highlighted the actions. The Viet Cong were engaged wherever they were found and emphasis was placed on finding and destroying the enemy's haven and supplies. The sting of the BIG RED ONE was felt

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by many VC as the Division fought its way through operations like BUSHMASTER, BLOODHOUND, BUCKSKIN and ROLLING STONE under the command of MG Seaman.

But the war was not all fighting. The men also found time to make friends and aid the Vietnamese people, conducting MEDCAP (Medical Civic Action Programs) visits to villages, reconstructing schools and building roads. The work on the base camps was also continuing. What was once a bleak jungle or a flat wasteland, like Phu Loi, was now looking habitable. Perimeters were strengthened, showers were built, and tents slowly began to be replaced by permanent-type buildings. The 1st Division Band made its premier performance, at a Vietnamese school. Its first song was the Vietnamese National Anthem.

During Operation BLOODHOUND, conducted by the 3d Brigade, some 301 VC were killed in fierce fighting nine kilometers west of the BATTLE OF BAU BANG area near the huge Michelin Rubber Plantation. The BATTLE OF AP NHA MAT began on Dec 5 when the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry was awarded the Valorous Unit Citation, equal to a Silver Star for individual heroism.

CANDY FOR A BRAVE wee patient is given out by SP5 Robert A. Elkowitz and SP4 Gary G. Zimmerman, during a MEDCAP near Phu Loi.

121st Signal Battalion

ARTILLERY played a leading role in defense of BIG RED ONE *perimeter during fierce Battle of Bau Bang. Men of the 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery fired point blank at charging* VC, *later blasted likely avenues of enemy escape.*

121st Signal Battalion

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121st Signal Battalion

CONSTANT PRESSURE was maintained on the enemy through patrolling and search and destroy missions during the first month the Division was in Vietnam. A company prepares to clear both sides of a road (above) in Bien Hoa Province. ▲

◀ *RECON PATROL RECEIVES sniper fire from Viet Cong during fighting in early 1966.*

121st Signal Battalion

CHINOOK HELICOPTER from the 11th Aviation Battalion (right), lifts a 105mm howitzer into position near the Michelin plantation prior to the BATTLE OF AP NHA MAT *on December 5, 1965. During the battle, the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry overran a heavily fortified* VC *base camp. For its actions, the Battalion was presented the Valorous Unit Citation. Below, rice captured in the base camp is loaded for helicopter extraction.*

In the early part of 1966, the Fighting First began trading in its M-14 rifles for the new lighter M-16. The short black rifle eased the combat load of the infantryman and at the same time gave him increased firepower. Nearly twice as much ammo could be carried for the M-16 with no added weight. The shorter weapon was also handier to use in the heavy jungle where the BIG RED ONE so often fought. The M-16, along with the M-79 grenade launcher and the M-60 machine gun, became the trademarks of the infantryman in Vietnam.

SP4 Raymond R. Pezzoli

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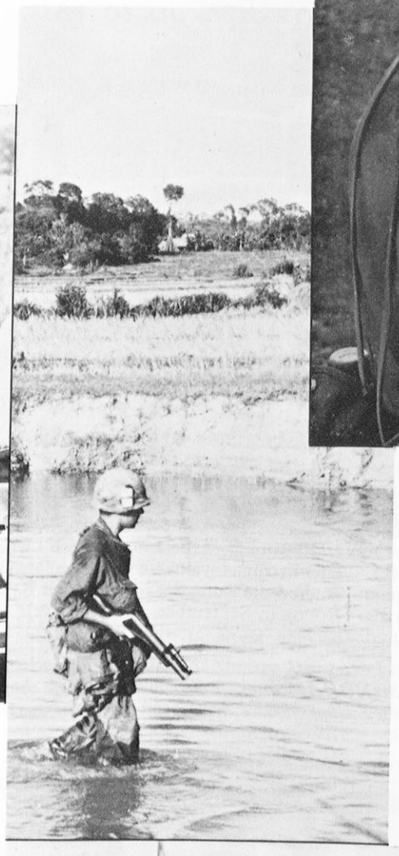
CPL Dennis Balfour

1LT W. C. Pflaum

121st Signal Battalion

SP4 Richard Dabney



NEW WEAPONS used in Vietnam provide the soldier with maximum fire-power at minimum weight. Early in 1966, BIG RED ONE *soldiers began using the M-16 rifle. The 16, firing a fast lightweight cartridge either semi- or fully-automatic, has proven an effective individual weapon. Weighing less than seven pounds, it enables the infantrymen to carry an increased amount of ammunition. The belt-fed M-60 fills the need for a dependable lightweight machine gun to provide increased firepower. Usually fired from a bipod, it is also easily carried in the field and can be put to use immediately when the enemy is contacted. The M-79 grenade launcher provides a personal firearm for engaging area targets. It is capable of delivering a 40 mm grenade up to 300 meters and is especially useful when specific targets are hard to spot.*

121st Signal Battalion

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SFC Fank P. Castro

MG DePuy assumed command of the Division March 15, 1966 and served until February, 1967. During this time the BIG RED ONE *fought from the Rung Sat to the tip of War Zone C in the largest operations of the war.*

"During the next days, weeks, and months, we will have many opportunities to demonstrate that we can live up to this, the first of all Divisions."

Major General William E. DePuy

The BIG RED ONE had been in Vietnam for little more than six months, but names like Bau Bang and Ap Nha Mat had been added to the list of places where the Division had seen victory in two previous wars.

Upon assuming command, General DePuy commented, "It is a privilege for me to join your ranks; ... I am well aware of the illustrious history of the Division ... During the next days, weeks and months, we will have many opportunities to demonstrate that we can live up to this, the first of all Divisions."

The BIG RED ONE made ample use of its opportunities. Under its new commander, the Division moved to prevent a suspected enemy monsoon offensive. During Operation BIRMINGHAM, huge supplies of rice, salt, and other essentials needed by the Viet Cong were captured or destroyed. In the first few days of the operation, 18 enemy base camps were located.

In Operation LEXINGTON, Division forces invaded the Rung Sat, the swampy delta area southeast of Saigon. The major shipping channels from the South China sea into the port city of Saigon wind through the saltwater area covered by dense jungle and spider webbed with rivers and streams. The Rung Sat had long been a stronghold for the VC who had preyed on the ships which moved through the area. During Operation LEXINGTON the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry destroyed numerous base camps, capturing weapons and gaining experience which would later become invaluable when the Division entered the Rung Sat in Operation BATON ROUGE in September. They were to become know as the *Swamprats*.

On March 6, LT Robert J. Hibbs led an ambush patrol of the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry against a VC force headed toward the battalion perimemter. After detonating anti-personnel mines, he threw grenades and fired on the VC leader to cover his patrol's withdrawal. The patrol ran into another VC force minutes later. LT Hibbs led an attack through the enemy element. After his men had reached the perimeter, LT Hibbs and a sergeant returned to rescue a wounded soldier trapped between the VC forces. Hibbs died advancing on a machine gun position with a pistol and his rifle while the wounded man was dragged away. For his actions, LT Hibbs was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the first member of the BIG RED ONE in Vietnam to receive the Nation's highest award.

On March 15, General Seaman said farewell to the BIG RED ONE. The command was taken by MG William E. DePuy. MG Seaman took command of II Field Force and was later promoted to three-star rank, after serving as the Division's Commanding General for two years.He would not be far from the BIG RED ONE however, as the Division and II Field Force would work hand in hand in the III Corps area.

"This is the saddest day of my career," General Seaman said. "For as soon as this ceremony is over, I will have to remove the BIG RED ONE patch from my left shoulder. There are no more magnificent soldiers anywhere than right here. I know that you will continue to add glorious pages to our history."

OPERATION BIRMINGHAM nears an end, as men of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry climb aboard helicopters to return to their base camp.

SP4 Raymond R. Pezzoli

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121st Signal Battalion

CAPTURED RICE is loaded onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter to be distributed to Vietnamese war refugees. The rice was captured in a Viet Cong base camp by B Company, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry, during Operation BIRMINGHAM.

The Viet Cong unwittingly became participants in the celebration of the BIG RED ONE's 49th Anniversary Day on June 8, 1966. The Division was now engaged in the highly successful Operation EL PASO II, a massive counteroffensive against the 9th VC Division to relieve the pressure imposed on government and military posts located in northern Bing Long Province by an estimated four VC battalions.

At shortly after 3 p.m., on June 8, the lead tank of A Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry hit a mine along the now infamous Highway 13, some 70 miles north of Saigon. The mine was a signal for two VC battalions hidden in the jungle to open their attack from both sides of the road. But the VC had not counted on the quick reaction or the firepower of the Cav troop commanded by CPT Ralph Sturges. The tanks and armored personnel carriers immediately returned the fire. Artillery and air strikes were called in as the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry, commanded by LTC Herbert J. McChrystal, Jr. moved to assist.

At first light on June 9, a multi-brigade task force under the command of BG Melvin Zais, Assistant Division Commander, began a search of the jungle to uncover the remainder of the fleeing VC battalions. By mid-morning of June 9, 93 VC bodies had been counted.

On June 30, B and C Troops of the 4th Cavalry under the command of LTC Lee Lewane, fought off a large force from the 271st VC Regiment again along Highway 13. More than 80 air sorties were called in against the VC and Division artillery pounded the area during the daylong battle. The 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry joined the action under operational control of the 4th Cavarly and the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry moved into blocking positions. . . . 239 VC were killed.

After the June 30 battle, the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry and the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry were moved into blocking positions cutting off elements of the VC trying to escape. In their positions, the 28th Infantry came under violent repeated attacks from the VC who had encircled their position. Several times during the battle, the enemy nearly overran the defenders' positions but were finally driven back by a heavy volune of small arms and artillery fire and air strikes. The infantryman was learning that his best friend on the Vietnam battlefield was the helicopter. The 1st Aviation Battalion of the Division and the supporting 11th Aviation Battalion carried the Division elements into action, brought them supplies and provided destruction and firepower. The mobility left little safe haven for the Viet Cong in the Division's area of operations. General DePuy called the helicopter "the great novelty of the war." He continued," it takes the Viet Cong ten days to move three of its battalions. We can move five battalions in one day." This seeming ability to be everywhere at once characterizes the BIG RED ONE soldier in Vietnam.

4th Cavalry in Operation El Paso

121st Signal Battalion

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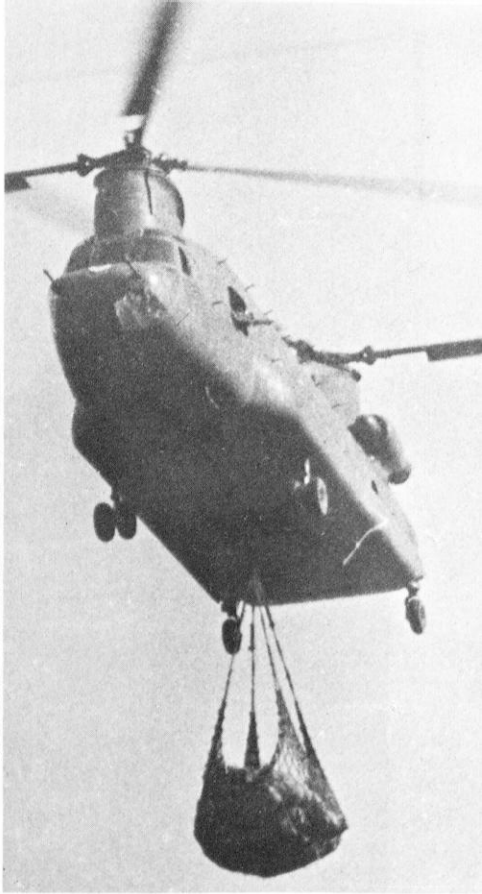
SP 4 Vince Cattera

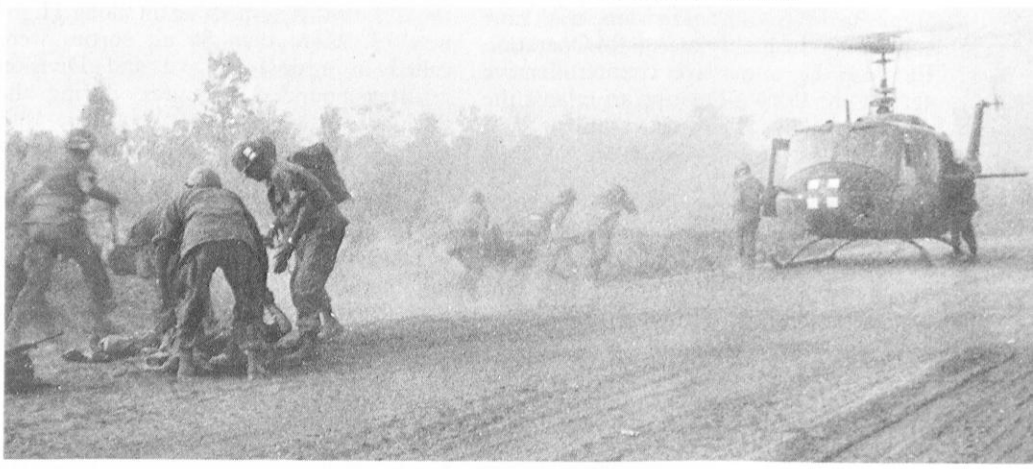
121st Signal Battalion



SP4 Richard Dabney

THE CHOPPER, as it is affectionately called, is the infantryman's best friend in Vietnam. IT PUTS HIM ON TOP OF AN OBJECTIVE READY FOR ACTION. Members of the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry(above) leap from a UH-1D to begin an operation north of Saigon. IT BRINGS HIM VITAL SUPPLIES. A CH-47 (above right) carries ammunition during Operation EL PASO II. *IT PROVIDES FIRE SUPPORT AND REPLACEMENTS. A second lift brings troops from A Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry (left) to join other infantrymen on the ground in Operation* JUNCTION CITY. *IT SPEEDS HIM MEDICAL AID WHEN WOUNDED. Below medical crewmen from the 1st Aviation Battalion carry a wounded soldier to a waiting "dustoff" chopper. IT TAKES HIM SAFELY AND QUICKLY OUT OF AN AREA. "Swamp Rats" of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry (bottom) rush to a chopper after completing a mission.*

SP4 Kenneth H. Johnson



PFC Joe Connor

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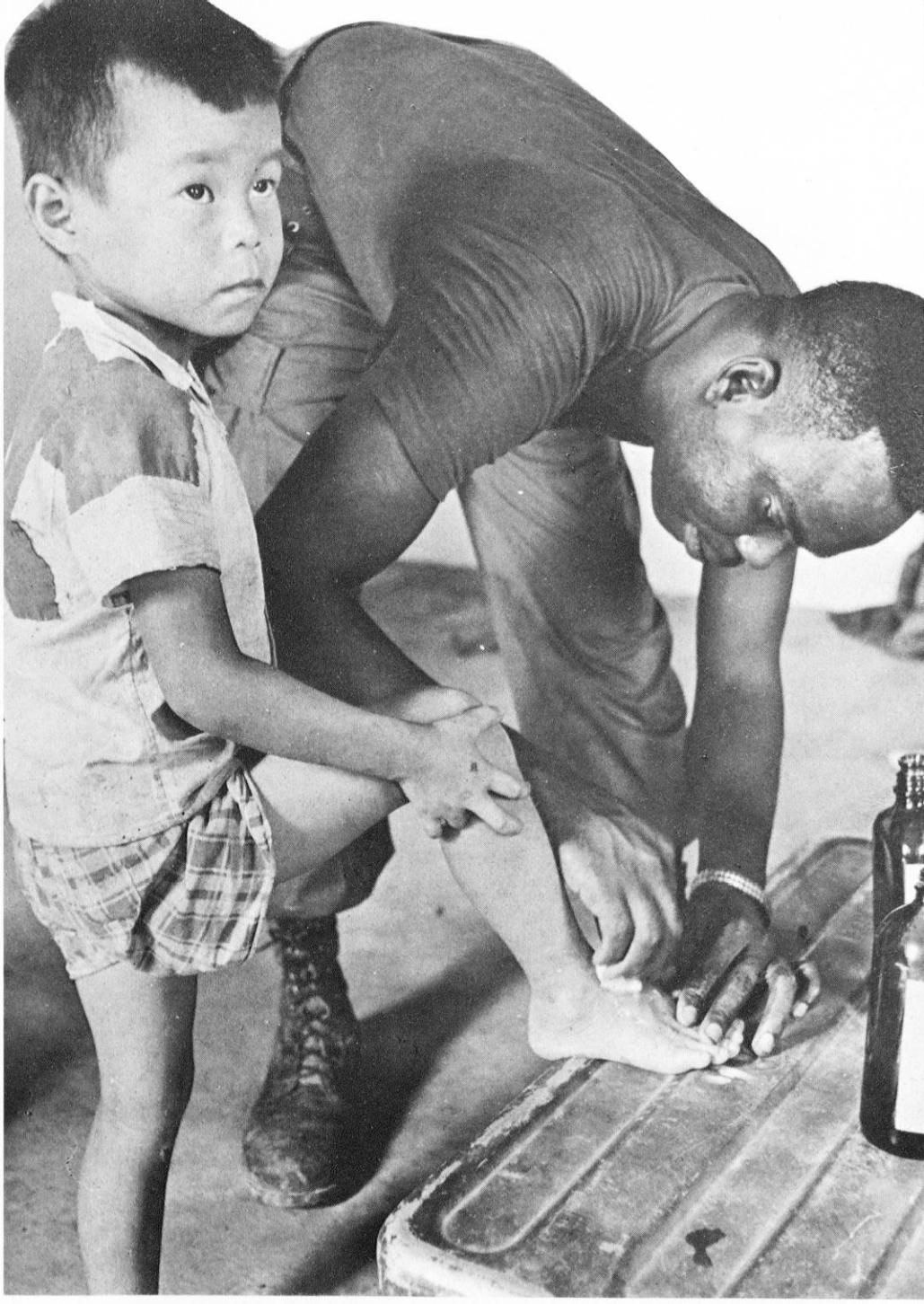
The Other War

Revolutionary Development



Alan Harkrader, Jr., *Peoria Journal Star*

While the fighting continued, the BIG ONE RED carried on another part of the Vietnam war. The fight on the second front to win the confidence and good will of the Vietnamese people. Operation LAM SON began in mid-1966 as a joint Vietnamese-American Revolutionary Development program. Under the concept developed villages are sealed, searched and made safe from VC influence. In conjunction with military operations during the pacification program, MEDCAP missions are held, bringing doctors and supplies

SP4 Reade F. Tilley III

KINDNESS AND HARD WORK are paying off on the war's "second front" to gain the loyalty of the Vietnamese. Men of the 2d Brigade conduct an operation in conjunction with ARVN *troops (left). Sp5 George Herron (above) treats the foot of a youngster during a Medical Civic Action Program near Phu Loi.*

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SP4 Phil Stitt

CPT Weyman Tison

121st Signal Battalion

THE ARMOR ARM of the Division, the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, fought some of the fiercest engagements of Operation EL PASO *II along Highway 13 in June and July 1966. Tracks prepare to move out (above). Later the Cav deploys along the Minh Tanh Road (left) during the July 9 battle. A recon-by-fire begins (lower left).*

to the people. The results of such an intensive program cannot be easily measured as those in all out fighting on the battlefield, but the outcome is just as important and may well be the deciding factor in the Vietnam conflict. To many a tough fighting man in the 1st Infantry Division, the look of appreciation on a Vietnamese child's face for the kindness of an American is indication enough that this has been a job well done.

It Became Known As Operation LAM SON...

On July 9, B and C Troops of the 1st Squadron 4th Cavalry, reinforced by B Company, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry handed the 272d VC Regiment a severe defeat. The battle took place on the An Loc-Minh Tanh road approximately two miles northeast of the Minh Tanh Special Forces camp. As the Division units moved down the road, they conducted a recon-by-fire in hopes of drawing the Viet Cong into a fight. The VC regiment, reinforced with mortars,

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recoiless rifles and grenade launchers, began returning the fire. The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry were immediately air-lifted to set up blocking positions to the west and northwest. The cavalry unit deployed and raked the VC force with .50 caliber machine guns and tank weapons fire. The VC were trapped and over 200 bodies were counted when units policed the area after the battle.

Throughout 1966 one operational success quickly led to another, giving the Viet Cong little rest. Operation BATON ROUGE again took the 2d Brigade's 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry "Swamp Rats" into the trecherous Rung Sat Special Zone. The Rung Sat, taking its name from a French word that means trees living in salt water, had been a haven for the VC for many years. The vast wasteland, some 30 miles southeast of Saigon, is blanketed with thick stinking mud and tightly woven jungle, spiderwebbed with salt water streams. The Viet Cong manufactured land and water mines and grenades in the area in addition to using the zone as a training, rest and hospitalization center. On August 23, the merchant ship *Baton Rouge Victory* was temporarily grounded by a VC mine and Operation BATON ROUGE was initiated to counter such stepped up enemy mining activities in the shipping channels into Saigon. The operation resulted in the capture or destruction of numerous vital VC installations including a large mine factory.

SP4 Reade F. Tilley III

SP4 Reade F. Tilley III

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THE RUNG SAT ZONE, located some 30 miles southeast of Saigon has been a Viet Cong sanctuary for many years in which they manufactured weapons and preyed on ships moving through the area. "Swamp Rats" of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry (above) enter the Rung Sat to begin Operation Baton Rouge. A large VC water mine captured during the operation is displayed left.

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121st Signal Battalion

CALLING IN AIR STRIKES is LTC Jack G. Whitted, CO of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry. LTC Whitted was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his part in the fighting November 8, 1966 during the largest battle of Operation ATTLEBORO.

In the early part of November, elements of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Brigades, plus artillery and support units took in Operation ATTLEBORO in Tay Ninh Province. The action involved more forces than any other operation in 1966. The operation began on November 3 when units of the 25th Infantry Division and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade engaged units of the 9th VC Division near Dau Tieng. On November 4, the Division was called in the battle and assumed operational control on November 5. The seasoned BIG RED ONE troops, plucked from combat operations just north of Saigon and along Highway 13 were rushed into the thickest of the fighting north of Tay Ninh.

During the first week of fighting units under the control of the Iron (3d) Brigade killed 570 VC. The major battle of the operation took place on November 8 when the 1st Brigade's 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry engaged a large force of hardcore VC north of Dau Tieng. The engagement began early in the morning, as the battalion, commanded by LTC Jack G. Whitted, test fired its weapons and conducted a recon-by-fire. The VC returned the fire with automatic weapons. An initial attack by a battalion of the 272d VC Regiment was followed by an assault by the 101st VC Regiment. The VC were thrown back only to regroup and attack again. Supporting airstrikes and artillery aided infantrymen who had rushed into position and put up a massive amount of defensive fire. Later, a search of the area by the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry uncovered huge caches of weapons and supplies. When Operation Attleborro ended on November 25, the Division had accounted for 845 VC killed; 484 of them died on November 8.

In addition to the valor of each fighting man, the victory in the huge operation reflected the tremendous logistic feats accomplished in keeping him supplied, and demonstrated the ability of the varied Division units to work as a team.

ON OPERATION ATTLEBORO, men of the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery, fire a 105mm howitzer. More troops were involved in ATTLEBORO *than in any other operation in 1966.*

PFC Joe Connor

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SP5 James Ryan

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TANK-DOZER TEAMS of the 1st Engineer Battalion begin a jungle clearing mission during Operation CEDAR FALLS. *A 200 meter-wide strip of jungle was leveled for five miles into the Iron Triangle. Clearing the jungle robs the enemy of cover, clears the area of mines, and tunnel entrances and provides productive farmland.*

DOZER-INFANTRY TEAMS plow their way through the Iron Triangle during Operation CEDAR FALLS. *The 1st Engineer Battalion used 60 bulldozers in the gigantic jungle clearning operation.*

▼

Early in January, the Division invaded a section of hostile jungle north of Saigon known as the Iron Triangle. Code name for the operation was Cedar Falls. The area had long been a sanctuary from which the VC launched mine and mortar attacks against Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh. Viet Cong political and military headquarters were also believed to be in the Triangle.

The operation controlled by II Field Force, began on the morning of January 9 when five infantry battalions from the Division and two battalions from the 173d Airborne Brigade were helilifted into landing zones throughout the area some 20 miles northeast of Saigon. Some 60 choppers from the 1st and 11th Aviation Battalions brought the troops in at exactly 8 a.m. Blocking forces completely encircled the objective. As the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry landed in their LZ, they began to move south as did the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry on its flank. Other units involved in the intensive search and destroy mission were the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry; 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry; and the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry. A total of 30 artillery units fired in support of the operation.

A few days before CEDAR FALLS began the 1st Engineer Battalion had leveled 365 acres of jungle that the VC had used as an access route to the Iron Triangle. Now the engineer tank-dozer teams drove deeper into the Triangle as they cleared a swath of jungle 200 meters wide from Rach Bap to Ben Suc, a distance of nearly five miles. This area would deny the VC a hiding place and provide fertile farmland. When the operation ended on January 25, 390 VC had been killed. But more significant, 576 VC had turned themselves in through the Chieu Hoi (open arms) program by which former enemy can become useful citizens. Another 180 were taken prisoner. In addition, large amounts of supplies were captured or destroyed including more than 3-thousand tons of rice and over 450 weapons.

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SFC Frank P. Castso

MG John H. Hay assumed command of the Division on February 10, 1967. He led the BIG RED ONE *into Junction City, the largest operation of early 1967.*

"I would like to add my congratulations to the officers and men of the Big Red One for . . . a long series of outstanding accomplishments. I am confident that we will continue to march in the same manner."

Major General John H. Hay

On February 10, command of the Division passed from General DePuy to Major General John H. Hay at a brief ceremony at Lai Khe. During the 11 months that General DePuy commanded the Division, it had seen some of its toughest fighting and scored victories both in battle and in its civic action programs. Offering his congratulations on the successful conclusion of Operation CEDAR FALLS, MG Hay stated, "I would like to add my congratualtions to the officers and men of the BIG RED ONE for achieving what was one of a long series of outstanding accomplishments under the leadership of General DePuy. I am confident that we will continue to march in the same manner."

The multi-division Operation JUNCTION CITY took the BIG RED ONE into the largest campaign of early 1967 on February 22. The first big action of the operation took place during a battle 18 miles north of Tay Ninh City. B Company 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry *Rangers* faced a main force VC Battalion. Greatly outnumbered, B Company commander, CPT Donald Ulm, called in air and artillery strikes immediately. COL Sidney Marks, commander of the 3d Brigade, sent three companies to reinforce the embattled unit. In all, 167 VC were killed. Following the battle General W.C. Westmoreland, Commander US Forces, Vietnam, congratulated B Company. "Company B of the 1/16 Infantry fought brilliantly in Operation JUNCTION CITY on February 28, near Tay Ninh City. The fighting skill, courage and determination of the officers and men of the company will serve as an example for all of us."

In another battle of the operation, probably the biggest single victory for the Division since arriving in Vietnam, the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, commanded by LTC Alexander M. Haig Jr fought off an all-out assault by the 9th VC Divisions' 271st Regiment on April 1. At one time, the Viet Cong swarmed into the perimeter only to be driven back by the determined *Blue Spaders* shooting out of all sides of their bunkers. Fighting at close range for over three hours with the vital assistance of artillery and air strikes, the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry along with the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry commanded by LTC Rufus Lazzell, killed 609 by body count, while losing only 10 men.

The Division was now a stalwart of the Vietnam war. Relying on unprecedented mobility and firepower, the BIG RED ONE had carved a record of victory all across the Vietnamese III Corps. Its motto, "No Mission Too Difficult—No Sacrifice Too Great—Duty First" was a proven fact of BIG RED ONE life.

On April 24, General Westmoreland journeyed to the United States to speak to a group of newspaper editors and later, the Congress. In reporting on the significance of the war in Vietnam, he said, "we . . . are involved in a total undertaking—a single all pervading confrontation in which the fate of the people of Vietnam, the independence of the free nations of Asia, and the future of emerging nations—as well as the reputation and the very honor of our country are at stake. At one and the same time, we must fight the enemy, protect the people, and help them build a nation in the pattern of their choice." On its 50th anniversary, America's oldest division is deeply involved in this new kind of fight. Remembering its heritage, the BIG RED ONE will continue until the job is done.

BEHIND BUNKERS men of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry prepare to turn back another assault by elements of the 9th VC *Division in fierce fighting during Operation* JUNCTION CITY.

Sp4 Don Tallman

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A VC SURRENDERS to the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry on a seal-and-search mission, during Operation LAM SON.

SP4 Vince Cattera

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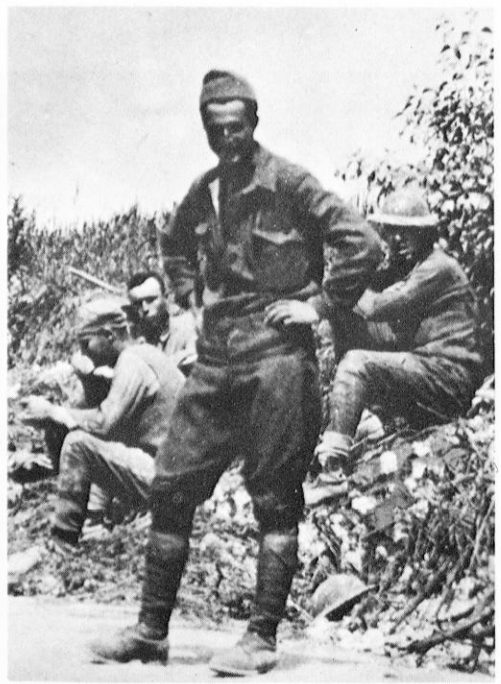

THE TIE THAT BINDS

SP4 Dave Hohman

SYMBOLIC OF THOUSANDS of Americans who have worn the BIG RED ONE *for 50 years in the service of their country are the men of the 16th Infantry in France, 1918 (upper right); CWO T. O. Beauchamp, Division veteran of 38 years, on Sicily beachhead, 1943 (center); and members of the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry at the site of a* VC *munitions cache, May, 1967.*

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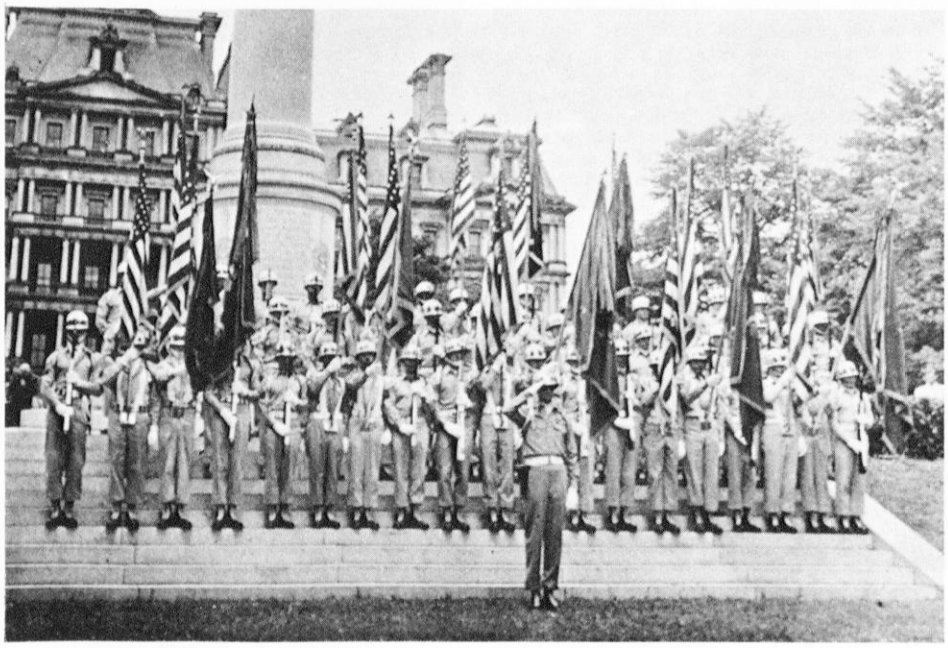
Service in the Big Red One imparts a tie of loyalty between members past and present. The Society of the First Division perpetuates the Division's esprit and achievements.



MASSED COLORS of the Division form in front of the World War I and II Victory Monuments in Washington, D. C. during the 1957 reunion of the Society. Plans call for building an addition to the monuments to honor men killed in Vietnam.

THEY FOUGHT AT CANTIGNY in 1918,on Omaha Beach in 1944, in the Iron Triangle in 1967, and preserved the peace all the years in between. The tie that binds the generations of Fighting First soldiers together, in service and loyalty to the BIG RED ONE, is manifested in the Society of the First Division.

The Society is a non-profit organization formed after World War I in 1919, at Montabaur, Germany. The Society has three purposes: it strives to celebrate and perpetuate the traditions and the spirit of the Division; it facilitates the continuation of friendships formed during service in the Division; and it attempts to aid members of the Society and the Division.

The leader of the organization is Lieutenant General (Ret) C. R. Huebner who commanded the Division throughout the European campaign in World War II. He was first elected to the presidency in 1948 upon the retirement of World War I commander, General Charles Summerall. General Summerall had been elected when the Society was organized. Major General John Hay, present Division commander, is the executive vice president. Two other combat commanders of the Division during World War II serve as honorary presidents. They are Major General Terry Allen and Major General Clift Andrus.

The Society maintains the First Division Memorial in Washington, D.C. and assures that ten European monuments erected as memorials to BIG RED ONE soldiers who fought there in WWI and II are properly cared for.

The monument in Washington was dedicated in 1924 to the men of the Division who gave their lives in World War I. In 1957, the memorial was enlarged and rededicated to the memory of those killed in the Second World War. Now the Society is planning a new addition to honor those killed in Vietnam.

Four of the mouments in Europe mark battlefields of World War I and are located near Cantigny, Soissons, St Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne. The fifth, located south of Sedan, marks the Division's position on November 11, 1918, when the Armistice ended World War I. The World War II monuments are at Henri-Chapelle in Belgium, at Cheb in Czechoslavakia, at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, at Mons in southern Belgium, and at Butchenback, Germany, where the Division held the line in the BATTLE OF THE BULGE.

The Society's magazine, "Bridgehead Sentinal," keeps members abreast of the Division's and the Society's activities.

Every third year, tours are sponsored for visits to the African and European battlefields where the BIG RED ONE earned fame in two world wars. The next tour takes place May 29, 1969.

Each year during July, August or September the Society holds a reunion. Policies for the coming year are set; the Division's activities over the preceding 12 months are reviewed; and friendships among members are renewed. The 1966 reunion was held at the Lido Beach Hotel on Long Island, New York. The 1967 reunion will be held in Philadelphia on August 17–20.

The Society has also established a program to visit the families of the men in the Division who have been killed in Vietnam and to visit wounded soldiers who are convalescing in Army hospitals throughout the United States.

As another of its far-reaching activities, the Society sponsors a Christmas party each year for the children of Colleville-sus-Mer, the first French village liberated on D-Day, 1944.

The Society awards $1,000 scholarships to children of former Division members or to Division members who intend to enter college upon discharge. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of previous scholastic accomplishment and an original essay.

Probably the most familiar activity of the Society to present members of the BIG RED ONE is the administration of the Sons of the First Division Scholarship Fund. This Fund was formalized in July, 1966, after a letter from Mrs. Rudolph Nunez to Major General W. E. DePuy was published in the BIG RED ONE's

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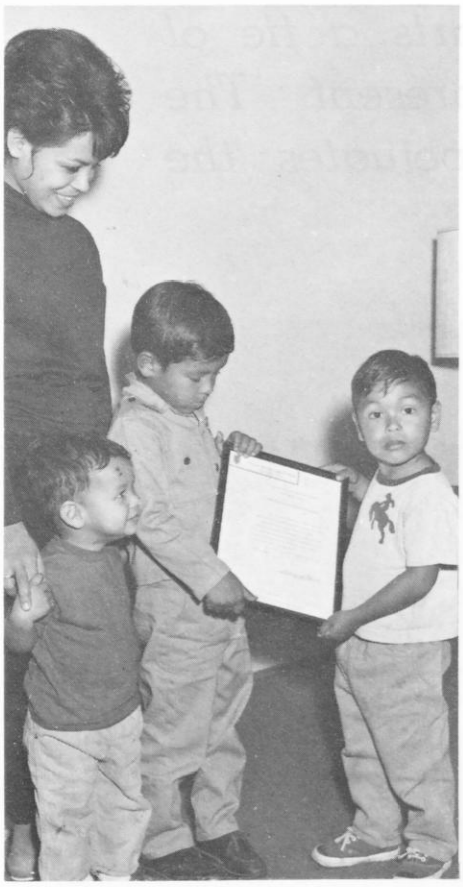


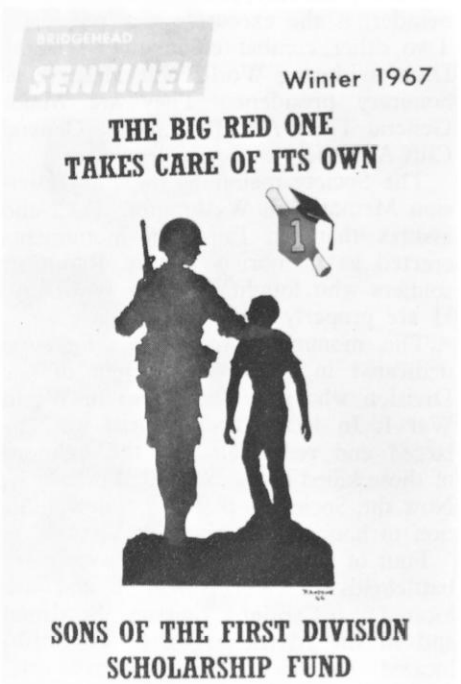
SCHOLARSHIPS for sons of men killed in Vietnam are administered by the Society. At left, Mrs. Rudolph Nunez and her three sons hold a scholarship certificate for Eric, 4, (center). After her husband was killed, Mrs. Nunez wrote of his loyalty and pride in the BIG RED ONE *to MG W. E. DePuy (right) then Division commander. The letter sparked establishment of the Sons of the First Division Scholarship Fund. General DePuty holds a scholarship certificate for Richard Fieller, Jr. (far right).*

weekly newspaper *The American Traveler*.

Mrs. Nunez's husband, Sergeant Rudolph Nunez, had been killed while on a long range recon patrol. Published along with the touching letter was a request from the Division Commander for expressions of interest about aiding the sons of SGT Nunez and other men who died while serving their country with the BIG RED ONE in Vietnam.

The response was overwhelming in favor of the project. The present Scholarship Fund is the result. By May, 1967, contributions to the Fund topped $100,000. All the contributions are voluntary and have come not only from men in the Division but from civilians and other military personnel.

The money is used to finance scholarships of $1500 which may be applied toward a college, trade or technical school education. Offers of scholarships have been sent to eligible sons of men killed before March, 1967. Eric Nunez, the son of Sergeant and Mrs. Nunez was one of the first nine sons to be presented a scholarship. The scholarships, administered by the Society of the First Division Foundation, serve as visible proof to the families of men who have been killed that the sacrifice of their loved ones have not been forgotten. The tradition of friendship and esprit among BIG RED ONE members past and present goes on—thanks to the Society of the First Division.



◀ *ARTHUR CHAITT, Executive Secretary, Society of the First Division.*

121st Signal Battalion

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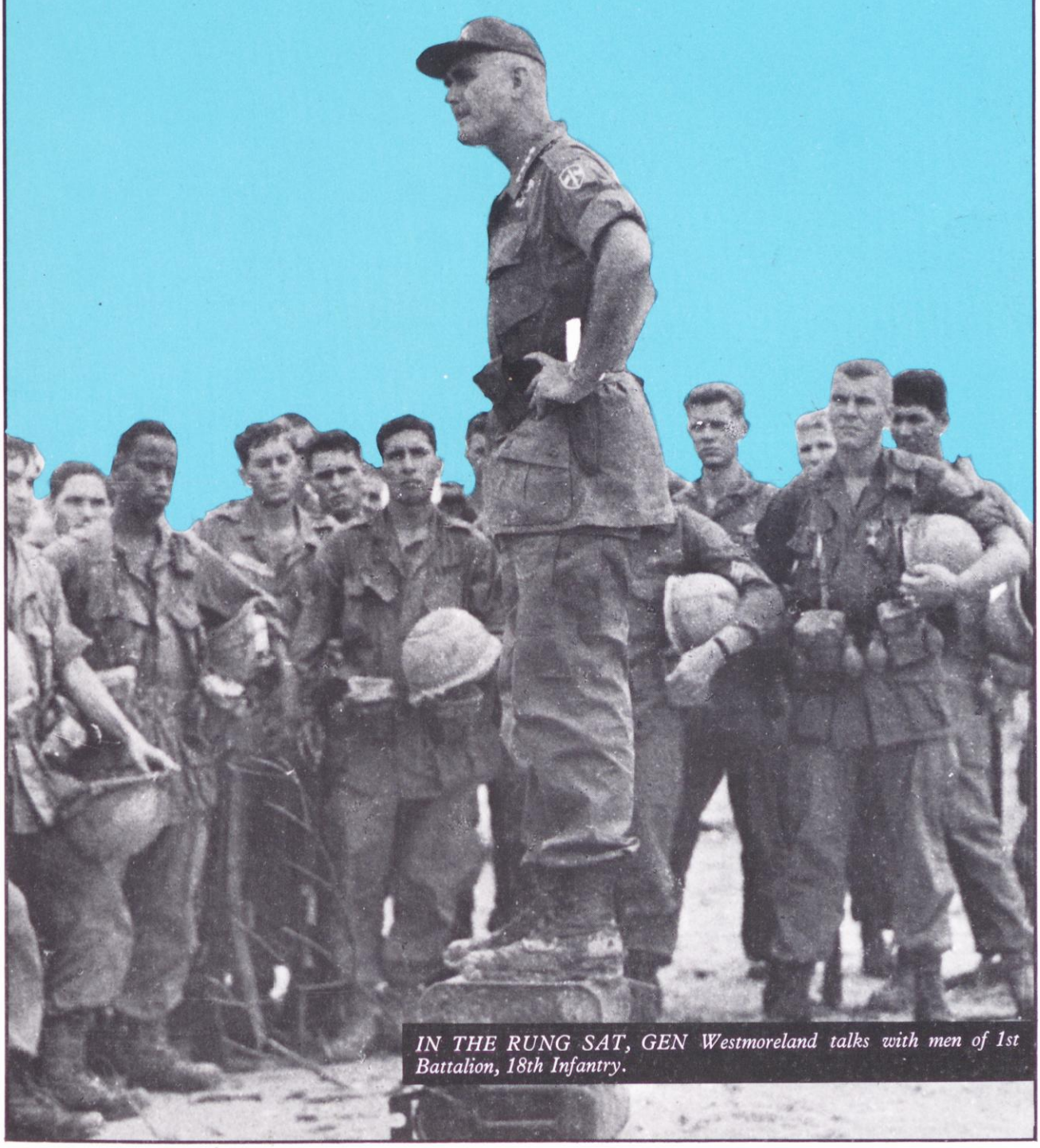
"The First Infantry Division is carrying out its portion of the fight for South Vietnam's freedom in a manner worthy of its fifty-year heritage. My congratulations to the BIG RED ONE *on the occasion of the anniversary of its organization."*

W. C. Westmoreland, General, United States Army
Commander, United States Military Assistance
Command, Vietnam



IN THE RUNG SAT, GEN Westmoreland talks with men of 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry.

SP4 Reade Tilley III

1st in WORLD WAR I

to go overseas

to fire in combat

to suffer casualties

to launch an attack

to capture prisoners

to enter Germany

1st in WORLD WAR II

to reach England

to land at North Africa, Sicily, France

to effect surrender of a German city

to crack the Siegfried line

1st* in VIETNAM

to be called to action

to suffer casualties

to engage the enemy

*US Army Division

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